

*J.J Tomiak (Ed.)*

**WESTERN  
PERSPECTIVES  
ON  
SOVIET EDUCATION  
IN THE 1980s**



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# Preface

When 1984 was only a few days old, the citizens of the USSR learned that the Soviet system of education was to be reformed. It was proposed to re-examine the educational objectives, restructure the educational network, modernize the content of education, improve learning and teaching methods, and render all study more effective. What was being proposed was not, however, a sudden change. Rather, a proposal, seen as an initiative emanating from Yuri Andropov, was put forward to discuss educational issues, which have for decades been seen as crucial for transforming communist theory into reality. A quarter of a century earlier, under different circumstances, another Soviet leader had proposed a series of measures to strengthen fundamentally the links of school with life. This proved much more difficult to achieve than had been anticipated. Will the new proposals, coming at a time of increased ideological competition, but also of intensifying urbanization, industrialization and mechanization, as well as of accelerating social mobility and growing need for a really efficient functioning of the system, be more successful?

The ten papers in the present volume are oriented towards the examination of a number of important aspects of education in the USSR that underlie all future developments in this field, and, at the same time, they place in perspective many studies of Soviet education undertaken by Western scholars.

The ten chapters are expanded and updated versions of the papers presented during an International Symposium on Soviet Education in the 1980s, organized in the University of London School of Slavonic and East European Studies in July 1982, with the support of the Volkswagen Foundation, Hanover, to which special thanks are due for making the meeting a success and the present publication possible.

J. J. TOMIAK



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# 1 Introduction: the Dilemmas of Soviet Education in the 1980s

J. J. TOMIAK

In order to understand and fully appreciate the role assigned to education in the USSR it is necessary to emphasise that in communist theory and practice the educational system is seen as being at one and the same time an integral part of Soviet society, the Soviet economy and the Soviet political system. One should clearly keep in mind that the educational experience of a child, a young man or woman, or, indeed, an adult, is a very important influence in determining not only what one knows but also what skills one commands and what attitudes one develops. In consequence, in a system that defines itself as 'democratic centralism', those who determine the nature and character of educational experience for the people have consistently sought to ensure that it orients itself towards the attainment of important communist goals: social homogeneity, high labour productivity and political commitment. Soviet schools and educational establishments ought, therefore, to be able to produce not only harmoniously developed persons but also determined communists unquestioningly loyal to the political leadership in the country, efficient workers and individuals with life-styles sufficiently similar to make social divisiveness impossible. This is, of course, quite explicitly stated in important Soviet educational laws and statutes (*Statutes*, p. 1). Ultimately, however, the type of social individual actually generated, is determined not only by official priorities and administrative measures but also by human nature, man's weaknesses, individual preferences, and the harsh realities of the social and economic environment in which people live. It is for this reason that, even in the long run, unrealistic and over-ambitious policies fail to attain their objectives.

Under a flexible socio-political system, objectives are open to subsequent modification and policy measures are subject to rigorous scrutiny and revision. Under an inflexible socio-political system, which insists upon the unchanging nature of the fundamental tenets and convictions, which must be adhered to at all costs, neither the objectives to be attained nor the main features of policies that are pursued can be easily abandoned. As a result, problems begin to mount, difficulties increase and differences between what is and what ought to be the case persist. Ultimately, some problems become lasting, irresolvable dilemmas, and some differences become permanent dichotomies, threatening to weaken the very foundations of the system. Despite all this, the principal features characteristic of Soviet educational policy have remained remarkably stable through the years. Educational goals identified by Lenin before or after 1917 are still being pursued in the 1980s. The central features of the educational system have not been challenged, let alone altered, since its stabilisation under Stalin in the late 1920s.

Khrushchev's important attempt to reform the system in the late 1950s was principally an effort to re-emphasise the original and basic objectives of communist education. The innovations of the 1960s and 1970s, which have been carefully examined by several Western writers, in no way entailed the abandonment of any of the main features of the system. Nevertheless, the careful reviews of particular measures designed to reinforce the social, economic and political role of Soviet education revealed the growing conviction among several Soviet pedagogues, economists, sociologists and political leaders that further steps should be taken to render the Soviet system of education more effective. In the ensuing years the educational system was to increase in social, economic and political significance.

Its social significance was to be strengthened in the 1960s and 1970s by much greater attention being paid to family pedagogy (Liegle), by the extension of pre-school education (Brine, 1980), by plans for lowering the age for the beginning of compulsory education (Dunstan, 1983), by the improvement of vocational education (O'Dell, 1983), by an increase in the number of schools with prolonged day (Prokof'ev, 1983), as well as by the re-establishment of preparatory departments for promoting admission of young workers to higher education establishments.

The economic significance of education was to be increased by rendering it more effective (Tomiak, 1983), by introducing into schools modern learning aids and more refined educational

technology, by the teaching of knowledge and skills corresponding to the demands of modern science and technology, by improving the technical and vocational education sectors (Brezhnev, 1981), by renewing the emphasis on polytechnical education (Prokof'ev, 1983), stressing the importance of educational and vocational guidance (*Komsomol'skaya Pravda*, 4.12.80), by introducing special schools for talented children (Dunstan, 1978), by establishing close links between production, higher learning and research (Tomiak, 1975), by trying to raise the level of educational administration and school management (Kasumova, Orlov), and by rationalising the school network through the closure of small schools and the establishment of larger, more efficient units (*Izvestia*, 17.6.81).

The political significance of education was to be increased by stressing the importance of youth organisations (Zajda, 1979) by the recourse to a more overt form of political socialisation (Carrère d'Encausse, 1978; Morrison, 1983), by the affirmation of the norms of communist morality in education and in the process of upbringing (*Pravda*, 19.6.83), by the emphasis put on the teaching of Soviet patriotism and proletarian internationalism (O'Dell, 1978), military and patriotic education (Zajda, 1980) and by the introduction of measures designed to improve the Party's own educational system (*Pravda*, 11.8.81).

Greater internal cohesion was sought by putting a renewed emphasis upon the principle of education that was 'national in form, but communist in content', by making determined efforts to ensure a reasonable knowledge of Russian by all Soviet citizens irrespective of their origin and ethnic background (Isaev, 1977; *Pravda*, 10.6.83), by trying to equalise the opportunities for entry into higher education (Avis, 1976; Avis, 1983), and by taking measures to attain a greater degree of geographical mobility of the population (*Uchitel'skaya gazeta*, 18.6.83).

## EDUCATION IN THE TENTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN

The performance of the Soviet school during the Tenth Five-Year Plan period (1976–1980) was examined by M. A. Prokof'ev, the Minister of Education of the USSR at the beginning of the present decade (Prokof'ev, 1981). He stressed an undoubtedly important achievement – the fact that secondary education had become universal – and declared that this had been done for cultural and social as well as

for political and economic reasons. The last reason was, clearly, a very important consideration; he emphasised that schools were assuming a growing responsibility for preparing young people for entry into the world of work and for providing them with vocational training in accordance with the requirements of the economy. Indeed, as he argued, in so far as vocational education was concerned, a whole range of ways and means had been employed: pupil's production and technical activities, industrial production centres and experimental agricultural centres. At the same time, the polytechnical orientation of all study courses was now more marked, the excessive formalisation in the presentation of material and over-abundance of non-essential information were being eliminated and special stress was being laid upon incorporating into teaching the latest achievements of science and technology.

Efforts were also being made to cultivate in pupils the ability to build up knowledge independently of their school work and to apply the knowledge mastered in a variety of situations and circumstances. In addition, significantly enough, over 12 million school children, or one in three in grades one to eight, were already attending schools with a prolonged day, while efforts were being made to increase that number. The balance of influence between home and school upon an individual Soviet youngster has, therefore, been consistently changing in favour of the school. The school is now a prevailing, if not the dominant, factor shaping individual character and pattern of behaviour.

## EDUCATION IN THE ELEVENTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN

During the 26th Congress of the Party in February 1981, both Leonid Brezhnev and Nikolai Tikhonov looked not only towards the first half of the present decade and what was to happen to Soviet education in the Eleventh Five-Year Plan (1981–5) but also towards the period ending in 1990. Leonid Brezhnev stressed – as all his predecessors did on similar occasions – the needs to upgrade the quality of instruction and of work-oriented and moral education in schools, to strengthen the links between education and life, and to improve the preparation of schoolchildren for socially useful work. While underscoring the importance of mastering science and technology, he also emphasised that more attention should be devoted to promoting physical culture and sport, as well as literature and art. While all this was to be expected, Leonid Brezhnev devoted a whole section of his speech to

ideological work, political education and the need to redirect the work of higher Party schools and seminars in general towards the study of pressing social and production problems awaiting solution and causing worry to the people (Brezhnev, pp. 35–44).

Although Nikolai Tikhonov's report paid less regard to education directly, by clearly indicating the need for better trained personnel in the economy, it concerned itself with education by implication. In saying that over 90 per cent of the expected increase in industrial output was to be achieved by raising labour productivity in industry by some 23–5 per cent, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers clearly defined the direction in which efforts made in educating the young should be developed (Tikhonov, pp. 22–3). *The Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1981–85 and the Period Ending in 1990* also identified additional educational tasks, namely, the need to improve and promote further evening and correspondence education, vocational guidance and specialist training as well as the need to ensure a more effective use of specialists in the national economy (*Narodnoe obrazovanie*, p. 66).

## ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF SOVIET EDUCATION IN THE 1980s

V. P. Tomin, one of the experts on the economics of education, identified the following five points as being of primary importance for rendering the educational system more efficient:

- 1 Elaboration of the optimum balance between full-time and correspondence education, day-time and evening studies, higher and secondary education and general and vocational education.
- 2 Rationalisation of the system of vocational education as a whole, which would guarantee the training of adequate numbers of workers most wanted in the economy; determining in precise terms the correct balance between the numbers of specialists studying science subjects and the humanities – for example, between physicists and artists, chemists and historians.
- 3 Introducing the optimum balance between capital expenditure and current expenditure in education, such as the maintenance of buildings, equipping schools with modern learning aids, laboratories and workshops.

- 4 Ensuring high quality education by expanding programmed learning and vocational guidance, by intensifying the concentration of individual educational establishments upon particular kinds of specialisation and by securing proper rationalisation in the geographical distribution of schools.
- 5 Planning timely and systematic preparation of the teaching cadres for educational establishments and elaborating proper plans for operating courses designed to improve the professional qualifications of the teaching staff; ensuring rational distribution of staff between the different forms of educational experience and between the different territorial units of the country; improving the use of staff by employing scientific principles in the organisation of their work in all teaching establishments (Tomin, pp. 119–20).

## INTERNAL MIGRATION OF LABOUR AND THE NEED FOR MASTERING RUSSIAN

Soviet demographers have stressed that the current Eleventh Five-Year Planning Period is characterised by increasing geographical mobility of the Soviet population. An important element in this is, however, the fact that an overwhelming majority of the internal migrants constitute young people, aged between 15 and 30 (Tomin, p. 178). There is plenty of evidence to suggest that in recent years there has been a considerable increase in some republics in the number of citizens of non-indigenous nationalities.

The new industrial complexes in Western, Central and Eastern Siberia and in the Soviet Far East are expanding and require skilled workers and experts in all kinds of specialisations. Implementation of the programmes for the development of the Baikal-Amur railway, the Tyumen oilfields and the coalfields in the high northern latitudes have stepped up to the flow of people in these regions. Higher wages and additional salary increments for those working in Siberia and the Soviet Far East ensure that the flow continues, indeed, gathers momentum, even though the outflow, too, is not inconsiderable and causes difficulties. However, determined efforts are being made to expand territorial-industrial complexes such as the West-Siberian, Sayany, Angara-Yenisei, Timano-Pechora, Pavlodar-Ekibastuz, South Tadzhikistani, Udokan and South Yakutiyan. All those who work and live in these complexes have come from various parts of the USSR. They can function effectively only if their professional

qualifications are high and – equally importantly – only if they have a good command of the Russian language. For this reason, as well as others, there are constant exhortations to ensure a more intensive and effective study of Russian throughout the Soviet Union. Undoubtedly, the significance of Russian is growing. Equally, there is little doubt that the intensive study of Russian is resisted in many quarters, where it is seen as an unwarranted pressure for the convergence of all Soviet nations and nationalities, the formation of a single internationalist culture (Khanazarov) and the loss of cultural identity among the smaller and less influential ethnic groups.

## ATHEISTIC EDUCATION

The renewed emphasis upon atheistic education in general education schools can be seen from the revised and expanded publication of D. P. Plotkina's *Ateisticheskoe vospitanie uchashchikhsya na urokakh istorii v V–VII klassakh*. The first edition of this book appeared in 1977 and the current one, containing 128 pages, in 1982. The book is intended as an aid to history teachers, and its three chapters deal with the atheistic education of pupils taking (1) the history of the ancient world, (2) the history of the Middle Ages, and (3) the history of Russia and the USSR. Included is an appendix, listing over seventy books that are considered background reading for the pupils. Most of these were published in the 1960s and 1970s.

The introduction to the book is of particular interest. As the author stresses, formation of an atheistic outlook and of an anti-religious attitude are important components of communist education of the young generation in the USSR. She says, further, that atheistic education consists of two interdependent elements, namely the criticism of religion and the cultivation of atheistic convictions. One should lay stress on the first or the second element, depending upon the level of religious belief among the population of the area one works in. Moreover, Plotkina insists that atheistic education should be carried on in the process of the acquisition of knowledge in all grades, in lessons given in all school subjects. The teaching of natural sciences (for example, chemistry, physics and biology) should particularly contribute to the promotion of a materialistic world outlook among pupils, an outlook that is critical of religion. Equally, the teaching of history from the Marxist–Leninist standpoint should promote the scientific–materialist understanding of the historical process, which

is completely opposed to the religious conception of societal development. 'Christianity and Islam, for instance, promote belief in Providence, maintain that the world was created by God and that everything in the life of an individual as well as in the history of nations depends on the will of the Creator . . . this work illuminates in greater detail the problems concerning, for example, Islam, and the Old Believers, which may prove useful for teachers in the areas where these religions are widespread' (Plotkina, pp. 6–7). In the final section of the book Plotkina stresses that it is the duty of the teacher of history to criticise religion from the historical and philosophical points of view, and that the formation of the scientific–atheistic world outlook should continue in history lessons from grades eight to ten.

## POLYTECHNICAL EDUCATION

One of the most important and most interesting features of Soviet education at all levels and in all types of schools ought in the past to have been and ought today to be polytechnical education. Properly understood, it should not be equated in any sense of the word with general education, monotekhnical education or vocational training. However, significant differences in the interpretation of the concept can be found in the writings of Marx, Lenin, Krupskaya, Makarenko, Blonsky, Shatsky, Khrushchev and, indeed, many others. Nevertheless, its major three elements can be identified. The first element is the cognitive, i.e. the knowledge of the principal branches of production, the main sources of power and energy, the principal kinds of machines and tools, and the principles of industrial processes and industrial organisation. The second is the moral, i.e. the cultivation of a genuine respect for work, both intellectual as well as physical work, and the concomitant illumination of the need for 'erasing the differentiation between manual and mental work' (Prokof'ev, 1981), since all human work is sacred and as such worthy of respect generally. The third is the practical, i.e. the mastery of concrete work habits, entailing involvement in the actual process of creating or producing goods and services.

The three elements ought, of course, to be united in the form of some meaningful educational experience or, rather, a whole chain of integrated educational experiences from the earliest years of life onwards. They should permeate the teaching of all subjects in all kinds of educational establishment. The Soviet efforts in the 1920s, 1950s,

and 1960s, and especially Khrushchev's reforms of the late 1950s, clearly indicate that the proper development and functioning of polytechnical education is conditioned by several considerations, among the most important of which are the level of the understanding of the concept of polytechnical education among the teachers and educators in general, coupled with a determination to use it in daily practice, and the degree of sophistication in the process of production prevalent in the country. Neither of these considerations are easily attainable, but until they both become a reality, effective polytechnical education seems out of the question.

## EDUCATION IN THE COLLECTIVE

Education in the collective, by the collective and for the collective has been receiving constant emphasis in the writings of all Soviet pedagogues. Collectives of different kinds have been formed for the purpose of securing specific short-term and longer-term objectives in schools, youth organisations, production processes and leisure pursuits. A careful examination of the writings of principal exponents of the importance of the collective, such as Krupskaya or Makarenko, reveal that neither sought a complete elimination of human individuality and its ruthless subordination to the collective. A more fundamental point, however, seems to be that, on the whole, people everywhere tend to be oriented towards individualism as the principal mode of self-expression and one needs to analyse the human propensities towards individualistic and collective action very carefully in order to strike a realistic balance between the two. No doubt a great deal of personal satisfaction, indeed joy and happiness, can be derived from either form of experience and both should be cultivated and fully explored in, as well as out of, school. Acquiring knowledge, mastering particular skills, developing one's talents, attaining a given form of understanding or, indeed, entering into any kind of meaningful experience all involve complex forms of consciousness in which both self-realisation and the shared perceptions and sentiments common to all human beings are implicated at the same time, and strengthen each other.

Soviet pedagogy is not lacking exponents of this view, and, significantly, Vasily Sukhomlinsky's writings have recently been receiving growing attention in the USSR. Still more interestingly, even the top political leaders appear to acknowledge an individual's right to

self-assertion when they refer to ‘. . . the complex world of the individual’, and accept that ‘in the long run (much) depends upon the interests and needs of the individual’ (Brezhnev, p. 37).

## SOCIALLY USEFUL LABOUR

Effective preparation for socially useful labour has featured prominently in all the statements made in the last six decades concerning the goals and aims of Soviet education, and these were carefully examined by writers in the West (Zajda, 1980, pp. 103–20 and 181–206). Interestingly, in more recent times, empirical investigations into the actual attitudes towards socially useful work prevalent among Soviet schoolchildren were undertaken by Soviet researchers (O’Dell, 1978, pp. 219–21). Such investigations are of consequence, since, in contrast to the regular but not necessarily effective exhortations issued through the official channels, they can identify the positive results as well as uncover the inadequacies of the measures taken and the policies pursued in this field. It is obvious that the willingness to participate in socially useful labour is seen as one of the principal characteristics of the New Soviet Man, and, as such, it must receive constant emphasis in the pronouncements concerning educational objectives, as well as in the practical efforts of Soviet teachers.

However, a genuine willingness to make a significant contribution to socially useful labour in industry, agriculture or the service sector of the economy on the part of every Soviet citizen seems to require a true dedication to work from everybody at all times. That this dedication may be forthcoming on a large scale in times of real crisis or at the time of revolutionary fervour is clear. The problem is to ensure that it is forthcoming in the daily performance of each Soviet man and woman. This seems to be a very tall order, and simple exhortations to encourage everybody to do his or her best at all times cannot be said to have been really effective. Yet there is little to indicate that, apart from the frequent appeals to the social and political consciousness of the citizens, other means are likely to be tried.

The motivation of workers in all positions and at all levels to perform their daily work to the maximum of their ability is, of course, a difficult problem in any society. One must accept that monetary incentives, applied on a large-scale competitive basis, are not acceptable under a

fully developed socialist form of organisation, but job satisfaction is a relevant consideration. That, however, is conditioned more by the actual realities associated with a process of production than by the attempts made at schools and other educational institutions to orientate children towards the fulfilment of their socialist duty in respect of socially useful labour.

## SOVIET PATRIOTISM

From its very beginning the Soviet school has attempted to cultivate in Soviet children, adolescents and young people the feelings of Soviet patriotism and the determination to defend the Soviet Motherland. On the one hand, national patriotism in its unrestrained forms has been seen as a force bound to degenerate into chauvinism and to result in an open conflict between different nations and nationalities. On the other hand, cultivating patriotism of a supra-national kind, based upon the political foundations of the Soviet state, which would unite all the Soviet people into one cohesive whole was seen to be a necessity. Soviet patriotism thus came into being and intensive efforts were made to strengthen it and to render it meaningful, even before the Second World War. As a cohesive element, it was not sufficiently strong to provide a force powerful enough to resist the German invasion in the Great Patriotic War. As a result, open recourse was made to Great Russian patriotism. Soviet patriotism came in again in the 1960s, in times of growing political tension between the superpowers, coupled with the stress put upon love of the Soviet Motherland and, in the late 1970s, coupled with military preparedness, the efforts to improve physical fitness and paramilitary training through the GTO programme (Ready for Labour and Defence), the Summer Lightning and Red Eaglet games, visits to battlefields and war cemeteries and the payment of homage to the heroes who died fighting against the Nazis.

The 1980s, seen increasingly as a period of intensifying confrontation between the socialist and the capitalist worlds, are exerting further pressures to reinforce Soviet patriotism as a source of inner strength and unity for all the nations and nationalities inhabiting the USSR. Determined efforts are being made to turn it into one of the highest priorities of education and of work of youth organisations at all levels (*Pravda*, 22.12.82, pp. 1–2).

## THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

It has always been accepted in the theory and practice of Soviet education that the moulding of builders of communism begins in the classroom and continues vigorously throughout the whole course of each child's education. Section Four of the *Statutes of the General Education School* (1970) clearly underlines the role that every teacher is expected to perform in connection with such moulding in the following words: 'He (the teacher) performs the honourable and responsible state task of the instruction and communist upbringing of the young generation . . .' (*Statutes*, p. 2). In the same document the first two principal duties of the Soviet teacher are identified as those of moulding in the pupils a communist world view and fostering in them the spirit of communist morality. The teacher of any subject is, therefore, considered above all else to be an ideological educator.

At the same time it is quite clear that steps are being taken all the time to improve the professional training of teachers, to supply them with a more profound knowledge of their special subject and to equip them with modern methods of teaching it. In the 1970s most teachers were trained in 415 schools and 199 institutes, but many thousands were trained in universities. Growing importance is being attached to the perfection of teaching methods, and its actualisation is sought through the aid of district and inter-school teachers' associations, conferences, self-education and, particularly, the system of regular certification of professional competence every five years. The certification procedures were laid down by an ordinance of the USSR Council of Ministers in April 1974 and the titles of 'Senior Teachers' and 'Methodologists' were introduced to spur individual teachers to further efforts. In 1977 the honorary title of 'People's Teacher of the USSR' was instituted, and the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the USSR was urged to intensify its research work in order that the progress made in the development of teaching and the related sciences could be speeded up.

## THE NEW PROPOSALS TO REFORM SOVIET EDUCATION

A proposal to restructure and generally to re-examine the different aspects of the Soviet educational system was published early in January 1984 by the Central Committee of the CPSU, under the title of

‘Guidelines for the Reform of the General Education School and the Vocational School’ (*Izvestia*, 4.1.1984, pp. 1–2). It followed an earlier statement on the subject, made after the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU in June 1983, which indicated that not everything was considered to be well in Soviet education and that its reform was urgently required.

The January 1984 Guidelines consist of four paragraphs, arranged into eight sections. They specify the measures that are to be taken generally to reorganise and improve the Soviet educational system. The aim of the changes is ‘to educate a citizen of a socialist society, an active builder of communism, who is characterised by ideological convictions and a highly developed work culture’ (Proekt, p. 1). The changes themselves are seen as long-term developments, extending well into the rest of the present decade.

The structural organisational changes that are to come are clear: complete secondary general education school will last eleven years, instead of ten; incomplete secondary school will last nine years, instead of eight; and compulsory education will begin at the age of six, instead of seven. The first four grades of the primary cycle will teach the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic, as well as the fundamental work habits; the lower secondary grades (five to nine) will provide a basis of understanding for all subjects taught and an orientation towards a profession; and the top two grades (ten and eleven) will concentrate upon more advanced general education in all subjects taught, as well as upon vocational preparation. Attention should be drawn to the proposal to introduce alternative kinds of bias through optional subjects in the top two grades: towards physics/mathematics, chemistry/biology or social sciences/humanities, for example. Not all pupils will be pursuing their education in grades ten and eleven of general education school: many will, as before, continue after grade nine in secondary specialised education establishments (SSEEs) or vocational schools. Ultimately, to attain full parity of prestige between the alternative kinds of education at this level, all vocational schools should become secondary vocational schools (SPTUs).

Admission to secondary specialised education establishments and to the SPTUs for a full or a shortened course may take place either at fifteen or seventeen. It is, of course, hoped that providing general secondary education in the SSEEs and the SPTUs will widen the social basis of the students admitted to higher education establishments, and make higher education less of a preserve for the stratum of the

intelligentsia. The section concerned with the contents of education indicates that the authorities believe that the quality of teaching in schools is not good enough and must be improved. This must be done by the teachers of the natural sciences making explicit the relevance of their subjects to technological change and technical progress, by the creation of well equipped laboratories, and by the use of calculators, computers and other modern learning aids.

The schools will have to aim at developing in all pupils 'an ability to freely communicate in Russian' ('... *Svobodnoe vladenie russkim yazykom* . . .'), so that a good command of Russian can become a norm for secondary school leavers of all Soviet nations and nationalities. Parental duties are stressed and parents are urged to develop in their children a habit of regular study and 'working hard with books'. A great stress has been put upon intensifying political commitment, the need to contribute to the building of communism, the formation of a Marxist–Leninist outlook, atheistic education, education in the spirit of Soviet patriotism and socialist internationalism, making much greater use of symbolism in the classroom, and learning and singing the Soviet national anthem and showing respect to the Soviet flag, the national emblem of the USSR and the emblem of the relevant republic.

Greater attention will be given to the maintenance of good health among children and to the development of their physique. Military–patriotic education will serve as preparation for service in the Soviet Armed Forces, and the general level of military preparedness will be raised. Parallel to this, efforts will be made to develop further the activities of the youth organisations – the Octobrists, the Pioneers and the Komsomol.

Effective preparation for work is stressed particularly strongly in Section Four. Both learning about the principles of industrial and agricultural production, transport, construction and the service sector of the economy and the mastering of economically significant work skills, work habits and work discipline are considered crucial. So is vocational guidance in schools. To help with the latter, much greater use should be made of the existing network of palaces and houses of the Pioneers, young naturalists' and young technicians' stations, hobby circles and clubs.

Section Five concentrates upon the social education of children and adolescents. Pre-school establishments are considered to be important for the cultivation from the earliest age possible of love for the Motherland, respect for adults, comradeship in the collective,

responsiveness to beauty and self-discipline. Schools with a prolonged day should increase in number, but after-school activities need thorough revision to become more responsive to children's interests. The education of parents to meet their responsibilities and education in the family receives mention, and in this task television, radio and the mass media in general should participate. Schools with a special profile, e.g. concentrating upon sport activities, music or art, are to be further developed, although, significantly, there is no mention of the schools for highly talented children in mathematics or physics and other natural sciences.

An interesting proposal suggests examining the possibility of the school becoming a centre for each micro-rayon, a sort of community centre, though this proposal lacks specificity. Section Six deals with teachers in Soviet society. A reform in teacher education is considered to be imperative and an integral part of the reform of the system as a whole. Stressing yet again the crucial role of teachers in the communist system, the guidelines propose introducing new programmes in training institutes and schools. These should aim at raising the general level of psychological-pedagogical knowledge that is being disseminated, at widening the teaching of ethics, aesthetics, logic and Soviet Law, and at placing special stress on the methodology of work in collectives. Courses in teacher-training institutes should all be extended to five years' duration, the length of the courses in training schools presumably remaining as it is.

More men are to be recruited into teaching, e.g. those leaving the armed forces with experience of work within the Komsomol's cells, so that the feminisation of the teaching profession should no longer be one of its dominant features. The guidelines are also implicitly critical of the quality of educational research in general and of the work of the different Institutes of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the USSR in particular. In contrast to the work done so far, future research should concentrate particularly upon the solution of educational problems dominating educational practice. All research should culminate in the formulation of concrete proposals to improve the quality of education in the country. The creation of the All-Union Pedagogical Society should prove particularly helpful in the fulfilment of this aim. A Central Museum of Education of the USSR should also be founded and 1 September of each year should be declared a national holiday, to be known as 'The Day of Learning' (*den' znanii*).

Section Seven deals with the strengthening of the material basis of education. This, the guidelines propose, must be improved in order to

provide proper facilities for practical work, out-of-school activities and the practising of sports of all kinds. More workshops, laboratories and boarding facilities must be built. Assistance from industrial enterprises and collective and state farms in providing capital investment should be sought. In particular, the network of secondary vocational-technical schools should be properly equipped with a wide range of modern machines and tools.

The final section concentrates upon the urgent need to improve the management of the educational system. There is, first of all, the need to ensure effective coordination between the work of all the organs of administration and management in education. Secondly, the quality of the work of school directors and class-teachers must be improved, both by organising special courses for the existing heads and teachers and by recruiting the most able individuals to such posts. Particular attention must be given to raising the general standards of work in schools in rural areas by making sure that the teachers in these schools improve their professional qualifications and teach in an environment which is not inferior to that prevailing in urban areas. The envisaged changes are to be carefully considered by the different institutions representing the government, the Party, the professional and educational organisations and the public in general. The proposed reform is, however, seen as being of the utmost importance for the building of a developed communist society of the future and for the laying down of stronger foundations for the Soviet economy as a whole. The remaining years of this decade will show whether the hopes of the authors of this reform will be realised or whether the weaknesses and shortcomings identified in the proposal will persist, and, ultimately, lead to even more profound and consequential changes in the long term.

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## 2 Research Concerning the Educational System and Pedagogy in the Soviet Union: Some Observations and Inferences

OSKAR ANWEILER

It is no longer possible today for a single scholar to command an overview of the publications that have appeared in all the various countries of the Western World concerning the educational system and pedagogy in the USSR, to say nothing of a critical assessment of such works. In the Federal Republic of Germany much has been accomplished by Wolfgang Mitter (1980) and Ludwig Liegle (1975). The relevant scientific publications which appear in Great Britain and USA in this field are, as a rule, carefully collected and registered in Germany; the reverse is, however, less frequently the case. On the other hand, familiarity with the corresponding work in such European countries as France, Italy, Spain and Portugal, in Scandinavia and in Japan can only be described as limited and accidental, partly for linguistic reasons. There are difficulties in communication even across the North Atlantic; these spring from the diverse activities and different interests of individual research workers in many places, as well as from variations and fluctuations in the demands of science. It was for this reason that the periodical publication *Slavic and European Education Review*, started by Patrick Alston in 1977, set itself the task of providing a bridge between North America and Europe.

Have we, then, an explosion of knowledge in our field? Is the large number of books and articles evidence of an exhaustive analysis of the educational problems in the Soviet Union, of real progress in our

striving for greater knowledge in this field? Have we achieved a higher scientific niveau fifty years after the appearance of the first trail-blazing works by Nicholas Hans and Sergius Hessen in English and German, works which were the result of isolated individuals, who had no proper support, no help from assistants and, initially at least, no positions in a university?

This is not merely a rhetorical question. On the contrary, this critical stance should enable us to identify some of the problems of current research on the Soviet system of education and Soviet pedagogical theory and practice; it should also allow us to reflect upon the present state of multidisciplinary research on Eastern Europe and on comparative research in education. The position taken by the present writer follows the aforementioned two-fold distinction: the scientific study of Soviet education and upbringing has its place equally in regionally oriented multidisciplinary research on Eastern Europe as well as in international comparative research in education, that is – in order to keep within the conventional usage of the word – in comparative education. It would be useless to quarrel about which basis is more important: this depends upon the concrete formulation of a problem and upon the actual theme, the interests of the receivers of scientific products (e.g. those who have authorised the project which is being undertaken) and, clearly, last but not least, upon the individual presuppositions of a particular scientific worker. If I am right, the ‘topographic’ discussions concerning the affiliation of our field of work to research conducted in higher order fields have neither significantly assisted nor hindered practical research; this does not mean that methodological progress has bypassed it completely.

The following remarks and the proposals which arise from them concerning interesting and important further formulations of problems and investigations are not necessarily very systematic, and, clearly, in consequence not quite complete. Moreover, they should be considered as being necessarily subjective and provoke discussion.

As I have already indicated, the works of Hessen and Hans mark the beginning of a systematic, historically based and, at the same time, critical presentation of the post-revolutionary Russian system of education and Soviet pedagogy. This historical approach has presumably most strongly affected all subsequent research work in this field in Germany: the books by Froese (1956) and Anweiler (1964), as well as various articles by Mitter and Baske, but also monographs such as those published by Schiff (1966, 1972) have attempted to present pedagogical developments within a general political and social

framework during a definite historical period. At the same time, according to the present writer, the history of education belongs exclusively neither to the history of ideas nor to social history but necessarily to both of them, and it must, for this reason, be researched from these two interpenetrating points of view (Anweiler, 1978a). In any specific case this may succeed only partially; nevertheless, it should stand as a guiding principle, otherwise pedagogical development will be conceived only as a function of the social process or an expression of ideological change, which will not do justice to the position occupied by education and upbringing in society as well as in cultural life. In contrast to the abovementioned German works, the two most important American presentations of the history of Soviet education, those by Sheila Fitzpatrick (1970, 1979), are based upon political and sociological considerations. However, ultimately, the abovementioned presentations complement each other in many ways.

An acknowledged lacuna of historical research in the realm of education is constituted by the lack of any study of the period from the middle of the 1930s up to the middle 1950s. This is the period which is referred to in general historiography as 'Stalinism'. The reason for this gap is probably linked first of all to the difficulties of access to sources and the quality of the accessible materials covering the period in question. The monotonous character of the Stalinist system, the daily gloom rooted in terror, the elimination of all experiments and innovations, all exert a frightening – even if at the same time fascinating – influence over any research worker dealing with that period; that, in itself, constitutes a psychological component that should not be underestimated by anyone. To this should be added the fact that great demands are made upon the analytical powers of any writer concentrating upon this period, for it was characterised by a camouflaged use of words and a stereotyped vocabulary that can only be mastered through prolonged acquaintance with the political-pedagogical terminology of the time. This gap has not been closed by *Ocherki po istorii shkoly i pedagogicheskoy mysli narodov SSSR*, a work which finally appeared in 1981 – more than ten years after the preliminary announcement of the publication – and which represents an official portrayal of the Soviet school and pedagogy right up to 1941. In contrast to the earlier books by Korelev (1959, 1961) and Korolev, Korneychik and Ravkin (1961), covering the years 1917–31, *Ocherki* represent a retrograde step, connected no doubt to a change in the intellectual and political climate in the USSR – a transition from a limited 'thaw' to 'Brezhnevism'.

For Western research into Soviet education the years 1956 to 1958 represent a break from a number of points of view: de-Stalinisation undermined the taboos and opened, in a modest way, the archives; the sputnik-shock created politically based interest in the Soviet educational system and, in the USA, led to a generous allocation of financial resources to research in this field, the most important and indispensable result of which is to this very day the work of Nicholas de Witt; finally, there came the opportunities for direct scientific contacts with individuals and institutions in the USSR, study tours, student exchanges and conferences. From this moment on, one can talk of contemporary research into the Soviet system of education, which to a large extent should be associated with the articles and monographs that have appeared in many countries. Among the books that were published in Germany, one should mention in particular the book by Detlef Glowka (1970), which appeared in the series of comparative country studies under Saul B. Robinsohn.

Glowka's work indicated, however, also a change in methodology: the primacy of historical interest was replaced by a systematic comparative approach. This turnabout was decidedly fuelled by a consideration of political character: research in comparative education should – at least to a certain degree – be made useful for the purpose of furthering educational reform in one's own country. In this we come to touch upon one of the central points characteristic of the methodological discussions in the field of comparative education in the 1960s and early 1970s, in the course of which it became evident that hardly any more fundamental impulses for educational reforms in the Western countries had originated from the researches concerned with the Soviet system of education.

Looking at it from another point of view, the tendency to examine educational problems in the Soviet Union resulted in an extension and enrichment of research: the demand for a transition from 'Ostpädagogik' towards comparative educational research by the present writer (Anweiler, 1971, 1974), expressed itself in a large number of comparative studies oriented towards the examination of problems, notably such publications as the study of polytechnical education in the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic by Gerlind Schmidt (1973), as well as the two research projects pursued at the German Institute for International Pedagogical Research which concerned completion of secondary education and matriculation (Mitter/Novikov, 1976) and the systems of higher education in several socialist states. If we want to include in our survey

comparative studies dealing with different political systems, we must mention in addition the investigation into technical education and professional orientation in France and the Soviet Union by Hörner and Schlott (1983).

At this stage, it is also necessary to draw attention to another special feature of research concerning the Soviet system of education in the Federal Republic, for which there is hardly any equivalent in other countries. Here I mean the close connection between the researches dealing with educational problems in the USSR and the German Democratic Republic, which are being pursued by the same writers. For this there are general historical and political reasons, rooted in the partition of Germany in 1945, and also subjective reasons, which are related to the individual scientific workers taking part in a given investigation and their broadly conceived research interests. As regards this connection, the question of the dependence of pedagogy in the German Democratic Republic upon Soviet pedagogy, or, alternatively, its self-reliance, as well as general similarities and differences in the political aspects of educational development in Eastern Europe, has been worked out in greater detail (Baske, 1967, 1980). The collaboration with Nigel Grant and his similar conception of the existing interconnections has, in this area, been developed for a long time now and has led to fruitful exchanges.

The movement towards problem-oriented comparative investigations covering several countries ought to continue in the future. The abovementioned problem of an alternative approach, i.e. area studies versus comparative studies, ought not to be revived, as this kind of juxtaposition has not proved very fruitful. Much more can be achieved from the point of view of research concerning the problem of Soviet education through the inclusion of a comparative element; this can also enrich specialised research on the Soviet Union. The more pronounced is such an all-embracing and integrating comparative way of examining the evidence in the case of an individual scientific worker, or in the case of a cooperative effort among many, the greater the chance of a successful examination of a given problem in the Soviet context. The book by E. Glyn Lewis, concerning bilingualism and bilingual education (1980), is an outstanding example of a work which stresses the importance of explicit theoretical criteria and is, incidentally, also an example of a work showing a preference for a broader factual basis. The previous work by the same author concerning language policy in the USSR could serve here as a starting point (Lewis, 1972).

Another issue concerning research on Soviet education and upbringing is the problems of nationalities in the educational system of the USSR. In contrast to the increase in research in respect of nationalities in general, which has been noticeable for a long time, the educational dimension of it has been receiving much less systematic attention. Since the publication of the work by Medlin *et al.* (1971), concerning Uzbekistan, which set an example, and the survey-like presentation of the educational systems of individual Soviet republics by Pennar, Bakalo and Bereday (1971), no larger monographs have appeared, so that the analysis of the problems of nationalities within the Soviet system of education tends very much to lag behind other kinds of investigation. Dominant among the American researchers are demographic and sociological interests (e.g. Silver, 1974). In addition, the teaching problems in the predominantly non-Russian Republics have, above all, given rise to linguistic investigations or become the field for experts in the methodology of teaching foreign languages. Recently there has been some change, namely change initiated by the inclusion of results of ethnological research and of the concept of multicultural education, which also promises to provide a further stimulus to the study of Soviet problems (Grant, 1981). This phenomenon also constitutes an example of the previously mentioned enrichment through the formulation of a problem in an all-embracing, international perspective.

The economic and sociological aspects of education have for a long time been the domain of American and British research on the Soviet Union, with the German writers following behind. This is connected, undoubtedly, to the well advanced development of the two fields of study in these countries, but certainly also to the strong preference for historical studies in Germany. The problems of social mobility, unequal educational opportunities, particularly in respect of access to higher education, recruitment of manpower and migration of workers have been extensively handled by Western research workers during the last few years. Quite recently the problems of upbringing and socialisation have received increasing attention. *Familienerziehung und sozialer Wandel in der Sowjetunion* (1970) by Ludwig Liegle was for some time the only comprehensive study in this field. His work was followed by Uwe Bach's *Kollektiverziehung als moralische Erziehung in der sowjetischen Schule 1956–1976*, which appeared in 1981. The latter represented the continuation of an intensive preoccupation with the problems of Soviet education in a collective, as set out by A. S. Makarenko, which has been characteristic of German research since as

early as the 1950s; this has an important centre in Marburg (cf. Dunstan, 1981). The second outstanding Soviet pedagogical writer, Vasily Sukhomlinsky, has so far received only marginal attention, except in Japan and, most interestingly, in the People's Republic of China, where Sukhomlinsky is very popular.

An excellent example of a new direction in research dealing with education and socialisation, which depends not only upon the examination of neglected themes but also upon a multidisciplinary approach, is the collective work *Home, School and Leisure in the Soviet Union* (1980), edited by Jane Brine *et al.* This reveals a definite degree of congruence between research interests in Britain and Germany, as these themes also found a clear expression at about the same time in a book published by the present writer (Anweiler, 1978b). In this area we are now entering a phase of fundamental and systematic investigations, and examples of what are needed are new investigations concerning the Soviet Komsomol and Pioneer organisations as agencies of socialisation, military training and training for defence as constituent parts of education for Soviet patriotism, and education for work in industry and agriculture. The study of juvenile problems in Eastern Europe in general and not just the Soviet Union, including criminal behaviour among the young, has for some time now been receiving attention in the works of Oschlies (1979, 1980), in which, however, the peculiar features of Soviet development in this field have not been represented with adequate clarity.

Finally, one should point out the still remarkably limited interest today in the questions of pedagogical theory and the philosophical and ideological premises of the educational sciences, in complete contrast to the 1940s and 1950s. Does this reflect a depletion of Marxist presuppositions, in the way in which this has been presented, e.g. by Kolakowski, or else the recognition of the merely instrumental character of the official Party ideology? The attempt by Price (1977), as it were, to reconstruct a Marxist theory of education from a comparative juxtaposition of the central pedagogic categories as stated by Karl Marx himself and their historical realisation in the Soviet Union and China (Price, 1982) is interesting, but it does not cross the boundaries of a historical analysis in favour of laying down a theoretical basis of a modern Marxist theory of education. The proposal to identify an ideal type of 'Soviet Man' within the framework of ideal typical normative models for education by Brian Holmes (1981), remains generally necessary, and yet it strongly resembles the official programming and rhetoric, with their neglect of social realities.

In this case it is necessary above everything else to present the function of official educational norms in the state and in society so that their effectiveness, or ineffectiveness, can be examined.

Quite interesting and revealing from the point of view of analysing the methodological assumptions, and examining the content of points for discussion concerning the Soviet theory of education, is the question of access to the history of Soviet educational sciences. There is still no detailed presentation concerning their development. What is lacking, among other things, is, for example, the history of pedagogy, although the work of a Dutch writer, J. F. Vos (1976), and the so far unpublished doctoral dissertation by Krüger-Potratz (1975), have already laid its foundations. The organisational and educational-political aspects of contemporary pedagogical research in the USSR were presented in 1978 by Mitter and Novikov. Together with a doctoral dissertation by Szekely (1976), dealing with the establishment of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the USSR, and the explanation of its statutes by Meyer *et al.* (1982), they have helped to clarify the principal features of its organisational structure. What are still lacking are investigations concerning the development of individual educational disciplines as well as the different experiments conducted in schools by the Academy.

This survey is, as I have stressed at the beginning, a subjective and selective one. Were we to attempt, finally, to draw a number of conclusions concerning the outcome of research into the Soviet system of education and Soviet pedagogy encompassing the last one or two decades in respect of as yet unresolved problems, then we could end with the following resumé:

- 1 The historical development and the present structure of the Soviet system of education have been quite thoroughly illuminated, even though there may still be some grey areas (e.g. those dealing with vocational training and further education). Interest seems to be shifting in a more pronounced way from the formal educational system to the relationships between educational institutions and the social environment, between school and out-of-school education.
- 2 Investigations concerning curricula in the different kinds of school and methods of instruction, which have not been explicitly mentioned here, differ very much in detail and must be extended further to cover additional areas.
- 3 The problems of administration of education and of internal school constitution have so far been neglected and should be tackled.

- 4 Questions concerning the formation of pedagogical theory and the development of educational ideas also await further elaboration.
- 5 Problems of education and socialisation, among them those especially concerning the ethnically mixed territories, certainly need tackling.
- 6 The intra-system as well as the inter-system comparisons in respect of particular areas, processes or complexes of problems in the educational system and in upbringing equally deserve further elaboration.

How far all this is possible does not depend only upon the goodwill, ability and zeal prevailing among the scholars engaged in the field. However, without these, further progress cannot be made. My initial remarks concerning the conditions under which Nicholas Hans, the founder of our branch of research in England, worked at the beginning of his academic career should give us some courage to persevere in our efforts, especially now, at a time when money is scarce and when there is a threat of restrictions, and, moreover, when in many other respects the general perspectives are rather sombre.

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# 3 Soviet Education: Travellers' Tales

BRIAN HOLMES

Over a period of more than twenty years I have made an annual pilgrimage to the USSR, visited a great many schools, pedagogical institutes, universities and polytechnics and discussed issues of mutual and specific concern with eminent Soviet educationists such as Kairov, Markushevich, Zubov, Menchinskaya, Luria and Leont'ev. Before my visits many of my presuppositions were based on long discussions with Nicholas Hans and accounts of the system by Soviet authors which appeared regularly in the *Year Book of Education* (Lauwerys *et al.*). John Dewey, in a similar position, was prepared to trust his own impressions and judgement, but I am not. Rather, I see regular visits to the Soviet Union as a way of testing hypotheses that arise from the vast literature in English and German on the system of education in the USSR (cf. Holmes *et al.*).

For example, observations made on my visits have confirmed some of the impressions derived from the literature. The analysis of Soviet educationists suggests that the creation of a 'New Soviet Man' would take time even after the overthrow of capitalism. In spite of the public rhetoric about changes, Soviet schools, even those favoured ones I have been privileged to visit, have changed remarkably little in twenty years. On the other hand, in spite of the impression given in some of the literature, there have always been, in my experience, considerable differences between one school and another, frequently epitomised in the personality, style and authority of the director, between schools in Russia and schools in Latvia and, more subtly, between schools in Leningrad and schools in Moscow. Long ago, of course, John Dewey thought little of Leningrad and commented on Moscow as 'new, nervously active; mobile, newer it seemed to me than any city in our own country, even than in frontier towns' (Dewey, 1929, p. 36). He

dismissed Leningrad as ancient, not looking European. After the reconstruction of Leningrad following the Second World War I find it difficult to share Dewey's views about Leningrad, but his description of Moscow as new and nervously active fits my own lasting impression. They are different cities and it is not surprising to read that in the issues of teaching methods and the polytechnical labour school there were, even in the early years of Soviet power, sharp differences of opinion between Petrograd and Moscow (Howard, p. 40). The emphasis of the Petrograders led by Lunacharsky was on an orthodox–progressive orientation represented in the works of Dewey, Kerschensteiner and Ferrière, which aimed at the development of the child's potential and individuality. The Muscovites found the concept of polytechnical education adopted by the people from Petrograd too academic and school-related. They considered that the good of the school community or commune should come first; a theme made famous by Anton Makarenko.

This is merely to suggest that from the early days of the Soviet regime differences of opinion and interpretation, and perhaps even practice, were observed, and, in my experience, they have not been eliminated from the system. For example, on the question of boarding schools at the time of the Khrushchev reforms, discussion in Moscow and Leningrad revealed the different approaches taken in the two cities. Scholarly literature has, however, frequently emphasised the monolithic character of the system and the absolute control over education by the Communist Party.

Such statements are not directly testable empirically. Deductions from them would suggest that all schools in the Soviet Union are virtually the same in the sense that variations are so slight as to be undetectable. My experience suggests that within the parameters created by European traditions similarities and differences can be observed. To be sure school buildings in Russia and Latvia appear similar in design. Classroom organisation is recognisably the same and not vastly different from what can be observed in most industrialised countries. School uniforms are retained, as in some English schools. Methods of teaching and textbooks will be familiar to any elderly teacher of physics (for example). Against features that are universal, pedagogical styles differ: teachers are either stern or tolerant; pupil organisations take on unique characteristics; and, if anything, textbooks dominate what is taught but ancillary material varies considerably.

In short, within a discernible European school tradition differences

can be observed in Soviet schools within parameters set by traditional practices. Differences reflect the persistence in Soviet schools of Russian practices and the debates about educational theory. Foreign writers have not always failed to detect debate and disagreement but their views have tended to be coloured by an ethnocentricity based on their own ideology and national origin, and by the educational problems of interest to them.

## IDEOLOGY AND EDUCATION

Careful studies of the literature suggest that the conclusions reached by foreign observers have been influenced by prevailing political relationships. Early American commentators were well disposed. The few British writers who described the Soviet system just before and immediately after the Second World War were anxious to portray it in a favourable light. Nevertheless the impression gained from the literature suggests that foreign research into Soviet education until recently played down theoretical debate among educationists in the USSR, and was based on the assumption that education can be fully understood within the context of a monolithic Communist Party and State apparatus.

Urie Bronfenbrenner, in his favourable foreword to Ludwig Liegle's account of *The Family's Role in Soviet Education* makes the point about American authors. He writes: 'Throughout our recent history we in America have tended to view the Soviet scene, in all its aspects, primarily in ideological terms. Even to a greater extent than the Russians themselves, we have insisted on interpreting every feature of Soviet life from a Marxist–Leninist point of view' (Liegle, p. viii).

Isaac Kandel's views are rather typical. His general assumption that decentralised systems are democratic and centralised educational systems are totalitarian (or at least authoritarian) finds expression in the judgements he passed on the Soviet political system and its schools. He writes: 'To read the Constitution or Fundamental Law adopted in 1936 is to run the risk of being trapped into believing the Communist claim that it is the most democratic constitution in history' (Kandel, p. 167). He clearly states however; 'Everything that is of an educational or cultural character is under the control of government or of the Communist Party' (ibid., p. 170); and in general that 'In order to carry out the ideological purposes set for education, administration is

centralised and control is kept entirely in the hands of the authorities' (ibid., p. 116).

Other American writers with access to the sources have reached similar conclusions. Herbert C. Rudman, for example, in *The School and State in the USSR*, draws a distinction between authority and power and makes the case that the Communist Party wields the power and sets up constitutional instruments of authority, and quotes with approval Merle Faisnod's assessment in *How Russia is Ruled* that the source of all policy-making in the Soviet Union is the Praesidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Seymour M. Rosen (*Education and Modernisation in the USSR*) suggests that control of the constitutional system is exercised by a parallel Communist Party structure and goes on to assert that it '... is maintained not only through the central committee departments but also through selecting Party members to hold key posts in education ministries, through periodic Party congresses and central committee plenary meetings ... and through Party directives disseminated within education ministries and to directing officials of educational institutions' (Rosen, p. 10). Jaan Pennar makes much the same case by writing: 'There is no more obvious proof of Party control than the persons who hold important posts in both the Party and the educational administration' (Bereday and Pennar, p. 46).

A question which has always intrigued me in my discussions in the Soviet Union is the extent to which educational success is the key to membership of the Party or vice versa. Certainly membership of the Party ensures that individuals have roles to play in the formulation, adoption and, indeed, in implementing policy, but I am inclined to think that the traditions of scholarship ensure that in many cases educational achievement is an important criterion for promotion to the Komsomol and the Party.

According to Bronfenbrenner, Europeans have been less inclined to adopt these simplistic relationships in analysing Soviet education. In praising Liegle's work he writes:

Fortunately our European colleagues have not been so onesided in their approach. They have been able to look at Soviet society not as a special case requiring a singular mode of analysis, but as yet another complex, contemporary culture requiring for its understanding a comprehensive analysis, and then synthesis, of many diverse sources of influence, including but not limited to, political ideology and its implementation (Liegle, p. viii).

In this context John Dunstan's judgement in *Paths to Excellence and the Soviet School* is worth noting. He writes that one complete misconception about Soviet education is that: '... along with other institutions [it] is an enormous juggernaut lumbering relentlessly upon its way, directed single-mindedly from above and entirely unresponsive to voices from below. A growing body of research has shown that this "totalitarian" model is untenable' (Dunstan, p. 12).

Simple observations support the proposition that in spite of the fact that major shifts in policy have been identified in foreign literature with the positions adopted by Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev, the relation between theory and practice in the Soviet educational system is more tenuous than is sometimes asserted. Clearly the position of the Party changed under a succession of Soviet leaders. Stalin did not call a Party Congress for fourteen years. Khrushchev set about building up Party membership again, and at a Party Congress some years before his death Brezhnev stressed the importance of the Party's role in the evolution of socialism (*Soviet Union*, 1977, p. 177). Changes in the fortunes of the Party may account for changes in major debates about education and the outcomes of them, but they do not explain the apparent persistence of practices that are recognisable in schools all over the world. Assumptions about monolithic control ignore the possibility that the slow rate of change in any educational system may be the result of genuine differences of opinion among educationists and the inability of any one group of theoreticians to overcome the resistance of classroom teachers. Moreover, the monolithic theory fails to examine how it is, as Mervyn Matthews points out, that many decrees and regulations have been passed but their intentions have not been realised in practice, and that there have been modest but significant reversals of policy. The public reversal of policy some years after the 1958 Law Strengthening the Ties between Education and Life highlights the successes, difficulties and failures to implement fundamental policies, which were very obvious to observers who visited Soviet schools between 1958 and 1964.

In parenthesis I well remember a particularly revealing example of the successful implementation of polytechnical theory on a visit to a village school outside Moscow, into which real factory machines had been placed to acquaint academically ambitious youngsters with working life. At the time Gagarin was circling the earth I sat in on a lesson in which the physics of space travel was, in response to this event, being taught successfully to a group of youngsters. On the other hand, I well remember the elderly mathematics teacher who was

committed to making clear the practical applications and social implications of the Carnot cycle (which he had taught for many years) but explained the difficulty of his task because he neither had a car nor had seen an internal combustion engine.

As for research studies prepared in the Federal Republic of Germany and Britain, or by European authors, the position is not quite as clear-cut as Bronfenbrenner suggests. For example, Romanazan Karça, while working in the Institute for the Study of the USSR in Munich, was writing in *The Politics of Soviet Education* (Bereday and Pennar, p. 4), about the factors that subordinate the entire system of public education to the goals of speeding up on a mass scale the training of specialists in all branches of technology and science, one of which is: 'Monopolisation of education by the communist state, which makes it impossible for the public or the teachers to interfere in school affairs'. There is also discussion in the literature about whether the Soviet Union is a totalitarian or an authoritarian state, and there is a tendency, as in the Soviet Union, to draw a distinction between socialist countries and non-socialist countries, implying that an ideological or political commitment is a major criterion on the basis of which to make comparative studies.

Authors from the German Democratic Republic, working within a framework of Marxist–Leninist theory, show how they are probing the implications of positions and practices they claim are based on Soviet models. The contents of selected articles, such as the individual development of every pupil as an important ingredient of successful communist education, the higher quality of communist education of school youth, effective communist labour education, the actual problems of society development and the communist education of youth, the role of moral feelings in the education of communist morality, experience in an active moral education, realistic means in the education of work morality, the development and solution to the dialectical contradictions in the process of communist education and the individual's socialist consciousness in the process of education in communist schools, reveal the emphasis of research in the GDR (cf. German Democratic Republic).

Even a brief visit to the GDR confirms that the framework within which educational theory is debated is Marxist–Leninist, yet in practice my most vivid recollection of the difficulties of realising polytechnical education in practice is of a physics lesson in the GDR during which the teacher, in an interesting and experimental way, was teaching the principles of the simple pendulum. These have, of course,

enormous implications for the organisation and running of an industrial economy. No reference was made to clocks or to the extent to which time-keeping was a major feature of modern industry, elements which should have been introduced if the lesson was to be taught from a polytechnical point of view.

Among the best known early British studies, books by Beatrice King and Diana Levin provided, from an ideological perspective, favourable descriptive accounts of education in the Soviet Union. Nigel Grant's well-known book is, except almost incidentally, relatively free from the ideological judgements made by some American writers. So, too, is that of Janusz Tomiak. It has to be said, however, that only recently, notably in the work of Dunstan and Matthews, serious doubts have been raised about the successful implementation, on selected issues, of stated policies.

Finally, closer examination of American literature demonstrates that its authors have not necessarily agreed with each other in their assessment of aspects of Soviet education, that their judgements have been coloured by political relations between the USA and USSR, and that several of them have recognised that, while Soviet educationists face similar dilemmas to their own, they have offered different theoretical solutions. There is a danger in assuming that educational dilemmas are not commonly shared and that solutions in socialist and non-socialist countries, because of their different political orientations, are inevitably vastly different.

## TRADITION AND CHANGE

Marxist-Leninist theory points to one clear dilemma. How can teachers throw off the shackles of capitalism even after the economic and political foundations of capitalism have been destroyed?

There is plenty of evidence in the works of non-Soviet authors to suggest continuities in Tsarist Russian and Soviet debates about education. Accounts by Nicholas Hans in *The Russian Tradition in Education* and William Johnson's *Russia's Educational Heritage* make clear important features of Russian education which can still be seen in Soviet schools. Oskar Anweiler (1964) has given a detailed account of the history of Soviet education from the end of the Tsarist period to the start of Stalin's era, and Matthews has analysed developments since Stalin. These research studies reveal not only that there is a measure of continuity between Russian and Soviet education but that during the

nineteenth century educational debate between the Westernisers and the Slavophiles dealt with some of the issues that are still under discussion. Leo Tolstoy, for example, a disciple of Rousseau, emphasised the importance of promoting the positive freedom of individual children. K. D. Ushinsky was a firm believer, in spite of similarities throughout Europe, of the uniqueness of the Russian national character. Neither of these views were decisively rejected as more radical materialistic views emerged.

The late nineteenth century was a period when the possibilities of progress through education rather than revolution were debated among German socialists. Maurice Shore (1947) has analysed this debate and its relevance to the positions adopted by Soviet theoreticians. Even after the Revolution, when the major argument became irrelevant, two views can be discerned. Krupskaya and others held that progress through education need not wait on the development of industry and improved economic levels. Counter arguments were made and probably prevailed after 1928.

There is no doubt, however, according to Lenin, that even after a successful revolution the residues of capitalism would remain and there was great danger that the old teachers would be the perpetrators of 'the false consciousness' characteristic of capitalism. Indeed, one delegate at the Party Congress in 1924 stated that teachers were the enemies of the new order. An American commentator, Fred Hechinger, in 1959 even went so far as to suggest that the Bolsheviks encouraged educational experiments that they knew could not work, in order to discredit teachers. Views were expressed that the schools could, and would, be manipulated by the more advantaged members of society to serve their own ends. My observations over the years tend to confirm impressions based on the more systematic research of Dunstan.

Certainly, Lenin in public announcements placed his faith in members of the Young Communist League as likely to be less tainted by the traditional educational system and the attitudes it had instilled. In short, many prominent spokesmen were aware that after the Revolution great efforts would have to be made to create a new Soviet (or socialist) man who could contribute to the creation of a socialist or communist society. This appreciation of the original task and the success that has accompanied Soviet efforts was recognised by Brezhnev. In other words, the historical dilemma has certainly been recognised by Soviet analysts for a long time. It is one facing all educationists who wish to introduce reforms – the uniqueness of the

Soviet problems lies in the cultural as well as the political-economic context. Consequently, knowledge of the socio-economic experience of mankind was held by Lenin to be crucial to the successful use of education in the development of society after the Revolution.

Foreign commentators have not failed to note the dilemma in observable circumstances. For example, although Susan Jacoby does not always agree with him, Bronfenbrenner points to the continuing accommodation between culturally rooted patterns of family life and child-rearing and the shifting requirements of economic and national life which shape what happens to children at home and school. I am suggesting that it is the accommodation between a historically rooted educational system and the changing policies and theories about education in the Soviet Union which should be in its various aspects the focus of research, and that the difficulties of accommodation are by no means unique to the Soviet Union. They characterise most educational systems. Moreover, in the Soviet Union they have not been resolved, even at the theoretical level, and in practice they are plain to see even by the informed 'traveller'. I would go further and suggest that a careful scrutiny of the literature, whether produced as 'travellers' tales' or as voluminously documented research (of which there is now so much that it is impossible to do justice to the work produced in such important centres as Bochum, Marburg and Frankfurt in Germany and centres of Soviet Russian and East European studies in the USA and Britain) would reveal that the genuine dilemma recognised by Soviet educators from the start cannot simply be resolved by fiat, except at the level of most general and high level policy.

## EDUCATION FOR INDIVIDUAL GROWTH AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF SOCIETY

Another debate in the Soviet Union has turned on how best education can contribute, after the overthrow of capitalism, to socialism. There, as in most countries, it could be argued, that the leaders have tried to create in Ruth Benedict's terminology a synergistic society, namely one in which the individual working for his own personal benefit is also working for the good of society and for the advancement of all within the society (cf. Abraham Maslow). The synergy of a society may be reduced by either allowing individuals to pursue their own ends regardless of others or by claiming that the welfare of the entire group should come first and individuals should be prepared to make considerable personal sacrifices in the interests of society.

In terms of educational aims the stress is between those who see education as producing good individuals working in concert to produce a healthy society and others who see the need to raise the level of society, e.g. standard of living, as a result of which individuals would benefit. This means that economic and technological levels must be raised first. There always has been and still is, in short, a tension between child-centred and society-centred aims in education in the USSR and elsewhere.

It is a tension which can be seen in the literature at least since Plato. Most observers claim that the purpose of education for Plato in *The Republic* was the maintenance of the just society. His theory of individual differences, however, made it possible to claim that in promoting the interests of society individuals, provided they knew their place, would benefit. The place of each individual, determined by his innate merits, would be in accordance with his ability to fill an occupational niche and perform a functional role. At the level of theory it is these beliefs that have had to be accommodated to new circumstances. Since the end of the eighteenth century, following Rousseau, children-centred aims have been stressed. For the encyclopaedists, following the Sophists, the development of civic virtue and reason would enable democracy to work; for the pragmatists this end would be attained through the development of intelligence and intelligent action. Once the abilities of children had been developed, the argument runs, and particularly those abilities relating to civic participation, education would benefit society.

The problem is found everywhere. How to find a balance between child-centred and society-centred policies and practices in education has always exercised the attention of educationists. Views of what constitutes the 'good' or 'just' society differ, and it is important to recognise that ethnocentric views colour the work of German, American and British authors who write about, and often criticise, the emphasis placed by Soviet educationists on the creation of a socialist state and neglect to point to the attention paid by theoreticians and practising teachers in the Soviet Union to the upbringing of individual children.

The need to accommodate the past with the present, and the desire on the part of educationists to maintain or raise the synergistic level of society, help to identify protagonists in the child- or individual-centred and the society-centred debates. In practical terms differences of opinion find expression in alternative policies: crudely, whether policy should be formulated centrally (in the interest of society) or locally (in

the interest of individuals); whether the power to implement policy should be centralised or decentralised; whether there should be a unified school system or a differentiated one; whether there should be a common (and probably compulsory) curriculum or whether individuals should be free to make choices. In terms of relations between education and society should liberty (individual-centred) or equality (society-centred) be stressed? Should the schools serve manpower needs or meet the economic aspirations of individuals? Politically and culturally should the schools stress conformity or allow for diversity? These questions are relevant to understanding the genuine dilemmas that have faced and continue to face Soviet educationists and are relevant topics for comparative research. They also draw attention to the differences of opinion expressed by foreign commentators on the Soviet educational scene. Each opinion is informed more by an ethnocentric view of the desirable balance in a synergistic society than by a deep ideological commitment. (Unless of course all philosophies and theories are judged to be fundamentally ideological.)

The concept of synergy throws light on the reaction of American observers of the USSR from the early 1920s and on the different positions taken by them. Generally, those who found evidence of child-centred policies and practices were enthusiastic, like Professor Patty Smith Hill of Teachers College, who visited the Soviet Union in the late 1920s and expressed views which preceded Bronfenbrenner's very favourable account of early childhood education by many years. On the whole, American observers who have looked for and found evidence of society-centred aims and practices have been critical, no doubt because they dislike the societal aims of Communists (cf. Rudman, Rosen and Mickiewicz). But the work of Nicholas de Witt (*Soviet Professional Manpower*) and other Americans should be remembered. During a period when a great many Americans were arguing against the progressive child-centred movements in the USA in favour of an educational system that would be in the interests of defence and the common welfare of American society, the contribution made by education to Soviet society was praised – for example, by implication in Arthur S. Trace Jr's book *What Ivan knows that Johnny Doesn't*, 1961.

I think this form of analysis goes some way towards explaining the reactions of John Dewey (1929, 1934), George Counts (1931, 1932, 1947, 1951, 1957), Thomas Woody and Scott Nearing to Soviet education in the early twenties and virtually throughout the decade.

Nearing's comment that the Soviet Union was, when he was there, the world's largest and most important educational laboratory was probably shared by many of the observers who visited the Soviet Union to see for themselves what was happening. At the theoretical level Soviet educationists were attempting to cope with issues of interest to Dewey and his pragmatic disciples. One question was how individuals could be educated in a changing democratic society in which commercialism and industrialisation were in the process of changing many features of American life. In terms of my analysis some of Dewey's followers were child-centred progressive educationists and others were society-centred progressive educationists. The frequently reported experiments inspired by Krupskaya and Lunacharsky must clearly have appealed to them. Whether they in turn influenced Krupskaya is a matter of debate: Soviet writers have praised and denigrated Dewey and Kilpatrick largely according to changing political circumstances, the most important of which has been the relations between the USSR and USA. William Brickman's claims (*The Changing Soviet School*) that American influence was considerable has been rejected by Soviet writers, notably Bernshtein. Dewey (*Impressions of Soviet Russia*) clearly thought that the Revolution had liberated people and that he was observing a period of transition, involving the release of 'human powers on such an unprecedented scale that it is of incalculable significance, not only for that country, but for the world' (1929, p. 15). This assessment reflects his own interest in releasing through education the powers of human intelligence to meet the problems of living. He also commented favourably on the provision the Soviet authorities were making for nursery schools and other facilities, which would forestall such consequences of industrialisation as, for example, the employment of young mothers in the productive life of society. Evidently, Dewey's knowledge of industrialisation was based on American experience, features of which may or may not have been replicated in Russia and the Soviet Union.

A steady flow of authors have indeed commented favourably on child-centred practices. Liegle and Jacoby have, however, made clear the difficulties of realising in practice the intentions expressed in policies and practices by pointing out that provision has not released mothers from chores they were historically expected to perform, and as nuclear families increasingly acquire separate apartments and *babushkas* become more and more rare, the difficulties are likely to increase. There is available in English detailed information about the

rules and regulations on the basis of which kindergartens are run (Chauncey, 1969). From my observations over a period of twenty years there are fewer differences between one kindergarten and another than are apparent in other institutions. Certainly at this level, although the collective and collective activities are stressed, the dilemma in terms of child- or society-centredness is neither very real nor apparent.

Dewey, of course, recognised Lenin's commitment to society-centred aims and refers to his assertion that the schools should and must not remain neutral but should accept a political role, namely the construction of a communist society through the new generation. Dewey accepted, less overtly perhaps than Counts and Theodore Brameld, that the schools and particularly educationists had a political role to play, but argued that only in a society based on the principle of cooperation could the ideals of educational reformers be adequately carried into operation. He seems to have judged that in one aspect of the society he was observing, the 'free and democratically conducted co-operative movement (in the Soviet Union) has assumed a new vitality – subject of course to control of prices by the State' (Dewey, 1929, p. 21). He also claimed that Russian schoolchildren were much more democratically organised than in the USA, and that the 'most significant change is psychological and moral, rather than political' (Dewey, 1929, p. 109). In short, he appears to have assumed at the time that in Soviet society the synergy level (reconciliation of individual interests and social needs) was high, and, perhaps because he was prepared to claim that the period immediately before his visit and during it had been one 'when American influence along with that of Tolstoy, was on the whole predominant' (and that French writers had criticised the Soviet Union for it), society-centred aims as such were not unacceptable. He believed, however, that while a future Soviet society would be different from capitalistic European societies, at the same time it would not be a purely communistic society – indeed one perhaps more like his own liberal America.

Many writers, including Oskar Anweiler ('Russian Schools' in *Russia Enters the Twentieth Century*), have examined the experimental period of the Soviet 'enlightenment', and I do not propose to add my reflections on issues that have been examined carefully by American and German authors, but to turn to at least one American observer who stressed the role of education in the reconstruction of society apparently to some extent on the basis of observations made in the Soviet Union. Just as Dewey has 'child-centred education' disciples so

he had ‘society-centred’ followers. George Counts was one of the latter. His general comments on the Soviet Union (*Soviet Russia in the Second Decade*) were highly favourable. He wrote that ‘. . . there is perhaps no place in the world where new educational ideas receive a warmer welcome’ and was inspired by his Soviet experience to claim that even in the USA educationists should not be neutral but should work towards the reconstruction of society. His criticism of American schools had already included, before he visited the USSR in 1927, the view that American schools served the ‘interests of the middle classes’. He seems, however, to have been particularly impressed by the introduction of five-year plans in 1928, which, he argued, gave direction to the task of education (1931) and praised the extent to which service to the group was given priority in Soviet education over the promotion of individual success.

One outcome was the keynote address he gave to the Progressive Education Association in 1932 – *Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order?* In it he claimed that progressive educationists had, rightly, shifted attention from a traditional interest in a scholastic curriculum but had failed to take adequate account of social needs in their preoccupation with and confidence in child-centred education. He made apparent that American schools socialised children into a set of assumptions, including political beliefs, and were not neutral. A similar comment could be made about any system of schools. Counts wanted American schools to create a new social order that was not based on existing capitalism but was planned with the intention of creating some form of socialised economy.

Thus, from their own perspectives, Dewey and Counts viewed the Soviet educational experiment as one in which attempts were being made to reconcile individual aspirations and societal needs. Of course, in the United States members of the social reconstructionist movement were labelled Communists, but there is nothing in Dewey’s writings to support the view that he believed in a Soviet-style society and certainly in the 1930s, when the American Federation of Teachers branch in New York was taken over by Communists, he resigned from it and Counts later ran for president of the Federation to prevent the election of a Communist president. This is not surprising, because by the late 1930s Counts and other American educators took a far less favourable view of the Soviet Union, no doubt as a consequence of the purges. Before his death, Dewey, of course, was involved in the Trotsky investigation. Others claimed, as is the case of several American authors today, that Soviet education was dominated by politics and the

Communist Party. Brameld's earlier enthusiasm for Communism clearly declined (Brameld, 1935).

Foreign judgements were based on shifting political assessments, but in spite of the political infighting that followed Lenin's death and resulted in the supremacy of Stalin after 1927 until his death, it is possible to detect running through Soviet educational debate contrasting views on how the balance between child- and society-centred aims should be maintained, and the reason for debate is apparent to foreign observers who visit schools and talk to educationists.

Historical exponents who legitimise the two different emphases are Krupskaya and Makarenko. Both tackled, in my judgement, the same basic problem. Krupskaya gave a child-centred answer (as her American biographer, Robert McNeal, makes clear in *Bride of the Revolution*, 1963). Makarenko gave a society-centred answer, and numerous authors from Germany have examined his position, without neglecting the benefits individuals would gain from putting the interests of the collective first. Makarenko's views were that through education the Soviet citizen would be able to refrain from actions and conduct that would benefit or please only himself 'while harming others and the community at large'.

Over the years the politics of Soviet education have determined the support given to these contrasting emphases and prominence given to them in the literature. There is no doubt in my mind that the issue is very much alive in the Soviet Union, and educationists are debating how far individual interests and potential can be promoted within the framework of education in and for the collective. Indeed, on one occasion I heard leading Soviet educationists debate the question at a meeting attended by educationists from many parts of the world. Rare though such experiences may be, they indicate that discussions and differences of opinion persist.

## THE ORGANISATION OF SCHOOL SYSTEMS

Probably the main educational issue on which the dilemmas associated with accommodating historical traditions and modern theories and the child- or society-centred axes have focussed has been the way in which the school system should be organised. In the USA Horace Mann and others won the battle for a common school and then universal high schooling before the end of the nineteenth century. Proposals to create

*écoles unique*, *Einheitsschulen* and comprehensive schools in Western Europe emerged after 1918 and at differential rates gained political support after 1945. The traditional pattern of limited educational provision for a selected few gave way in the nineteenth century to the creation of two or more differentiated types of school – the academic and the vocational – each type having its own status and providing for its students further academic or occupational opportunities. The traditional system in Western Europe was legitimised by Platonic theories of man, society and knowledge, and somewhat modified by encyclopaedism. The Soviet authorities, on the basis of a traditional European model developed in Russia, moved towards the establishment of a unified school and indeed a unified labour school.

It is this movement and its internal contradictions that has attracted the attention of several German and British research workers (Anweiler, Mitter, Dunstan) and has been the subject of much discussion in the Soviet Union. The comprehensive–differentiated middle school debate in the Soviet Union should be seen against the modest provision made in Russia before the Revolution. N. Hans and Sergius Hessen (1930) pointed out, of course, that at the time of their writing far less had been achieved in relation to the universal provision of education than many enthusiastic foreign observers had supposed, and officially it was admitted that illiteracy was not really reduced to manageable proportions until the mid-1930s. Nevertheless the experiment in the development of the ten-year undifferentiated school represents a break with the European past and an emphasis on individual children which offers a rather different model for Western European educationists from the US model. The success of this policy is evident, but the difficulties of maintaining it today are apparent to visitors to the USSR.

The slow development of the four-, seven-, eight- and by intention the ten-year school and the subsequent differentiation of school types, including vocational and technical schools, has been well documented. The provision of special schools for artistically gifted children and for those who show a special aptitude for mathematics and physics has been noted. The tension between comprehensiveness and differentiation has been considerable. Differentiation can, of course, be viewed from both a child- or a society-centred perspective, depending on the psychological theory associated with the distribution of abilities. Western Europeans have been less ready to abandon the notion that each child can best benefit from an education adapted to his age, aptitude and ability than Soviet educators. On the other hand,

it seems to me that success in the educational system plays a great part in admitting individuals to the Young Communist League and the Communist Party. Evidence of the proportion of teachers in higher education who are members of the Communist Party may well be designed to suggest how the Party controls the implementation of policy. A pertinent question is how far, in spite of the introduction of common schools, does the Communist Party consist of an aristocracy of talent, members of which have been selected, as in many countries, on the basis of academic success and personality traits?

There is no doubt that the school system is very competitive and that such competition can traditionally be justified on the grounds that it benefits both the individual and society. It is a dilemma that faces Western Europeans and, in my view, has not been resolved in the USSR.

Other characteristics of the unified or comprehensive school run counter to the historical traditions of Europe. The introduction of labour, the unification of theory and practice, and the integration of education and work in a unified school providing the same curriculum for all, are breaks with tradition. The insistence that it is necessary to bring work or vocational activities into a central position in the school curriculum was shared by Dewey, who, in an important article in the *New Republic* (1914), argued that the general education of children should be based on the vocational activities typically found in an American frontier town. The object was to develop the problem-solving skills of individuals so that they could collectively cope with the problems of society. Project and activity methods were suggested as ways of achieving this end.

There is no doubt that, in theory, central to the success of a unified school in the USSR is the provision of polytechnical education. Only through work can individuals receive a good general education, and for Krupskaya, and others, activity methods and the complex method were approved. Polytechnical education thus perceived is for the benefit of individuals, who as a result of this kind of education are in a position to contribute to a classless society based upon ownership of the means of production by the workers and the inevitable establishment of new relations between workers and managers. Dewey had no such conception and worked to perpetuate through this new education some of the abiding values of nineteenth-century America. From both perspectives, however, the approaches represent a break with tradition.

## POLYTECHNICAL EDUCATION

Central to the curriculum dilemma in the modern world are the issues outlined from their different perspectives by Dewey and Krupskaya. Few questions have been debated so openly in the Soviet Union as how polytechnical education can be realised in practice. Few issues have been so badly misinterpreted by non-Soviet writers whose background can be located in the Western European Platonic tradition. Some Soviet educators, to be sure, have seen the problem of the relations between education and work in quantitative terms, namely, in the success with which schools are meeting manpower needs. Wolfgang Mitter's commitment to the preparation of studies in higher education in socialist countries in terms of relations between qualifications and occupation structure reflects a Western European preoccupation with manpower planning. Such studies are based on the assumption of a simple (though important) relation between school and work. To be sure, Mitter's interests are in the possibilities of simultaneously designing courses in higher education to meet occupational qualifications and developing the personality of students.

Soviet theory suggests that the dichotomies between education and work and between theory and practice should, and can, be resolved. Interest in this feature of polytechnical education has not been strongly maintained among American authors, particularly since de Witt emphasised how successful the Soviet schools were in meeting the need for high level technicians. Nor, it seems to me, has this dimension of polytechnical education been of much interest to research workers in Britain or the FRG, since, as an approach to a general liberal education, it is antithetical to our traditions. Evidently, as mentioned, it is an issue of very real interest to authors in the GDR.

Debates in the USSR about polytechnical education have been continuous. The Leningrad faction thought it should be school-based, the Muscovites that it should be commune-based. In addition, the question whether it is a general education or vocational training has not been resolved. I remember a sharp clash at the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, when an official commenting on the success of the 1958 Law enumerated the number of new vocational schools that had been established and was sharply and publicly reminded by Leont'ev that such developments should not be regarded as representing the successful introduction of polytechnical education.

The relation between the educational system and manpower needs has received attention in the research of Federal Republic authors, with

questions about the possibilities of providing, while gearing the system to economic planning, a good general education. There are grounds for believing that in the USSR the planned flow of manpower from institutions of higher education into industry is by no means perfect. There is, as suggested, plenty of evidence from school visits to show that the general educational concept of polytechnical education has not yet been successfully introduced into general ten-year schools. More recent policy seems to suggest that a long debated alternative, in rather formal terms, now finds more favour, namely the introduction of general education into technical schools so that these provide a second way into higher education.

While the Marxist notion of praxis is widely debated in Western Europe by sociologists and philosophers, I find no inclination on the part of British educationists to consider seriously in curriculum debates either Dewey's views or polytechnical education, in spite of the great attention paid to relations between education and work in current literature. This reflects the ethnocentric approach taken to problems of interest to Soviet and non-Soviet educationists.

## THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE OF MANKIND

On the wider question 'What knowledge is of most worth?', foreign authors have tended to account for the common compulsory curriculum in Soviet schools by reference to the power of the Communist Party and the state to prescribe what is taught in Soviet schools and how it is taught. Such a view ignores the Western European tradition, originating with Comenius and the French encyclopaedists, and the position taken by Lenin, which was that to be a good Communist the individual should learn more than slogans and to repeat the whole socio-economic and historical experience of mankind.

This view reinforced a tradition in Russian education, widely shared in Western Europe, which was that all knowledge is worthwhile and should be included in the school curriculum. It is a combination of these two views as much as the power of the Communist Party and the state apparatus that accounts for the uniformity of curricula throughout the Soviet Union. The explosion of knowledge has created strains, and the differential achievements of pupils within the school system have created curriculum debates. Syllabuses, as was thought necessary in

the USA and Britain, and argued in the USSR but not unanimously agreed, had to be revised to include new knowledge and concepts. Curriculum reform in the 1960s was along these lines. At least two difficulties arose: firstly, how could *any* child cope with the additional knowledge, and, secondly, how could *every* child cope with it.

Discussions in the USSR persuaded me that few educationists were willing to abandon a comprehensive curriculum by drawing from the history of any subject some exemplary features. Educational psychologist Menchinskaya concluded on the basis of her research, however, that more children than had previously been thought possible could internalise highly abstract principles and apply them in such a way as to make knowledge of a mass of detail possible. Jerome Bruner's work was referred to. Markushevich, a mathematician, was less sure – but one outcome of this debate was the concentration of the four-year primary course into three years.

At the other end of the school, concern was expressed about the 'high flyers' and the 'low achievers', and apparently the outcome of this debate was the introduction of options for those who could cover the new material within the ten-year school and the introduction for the low achievers in the ninth and tenth grade of more mother-tongue language work and straightforward mathematics. These changes are reflected in optional subjects in individual schools in Western Europe, where historical traditions have decreed that as much knowledge as possible should be included in the curriculum, differentiation by school type notwithstanding. It is not a uniquely Soviet problem, and as in other countries the proposed solutions make accommodation between historical traditions and new circumstances (which have little to do with political ideology) difficult.

## METHODS OF TEACHING

Methods of teaching and learning theory have been debated in the USSR and have been subjects of foreign comment. During the experimental period in Soviet education, proposals to individualise teaching represented a break with tradition. During the 1920s the project and other methods of instruction were proposed by child-centred progressive educationists. The complex method based on nature, labour and society was put forward in the USSR as a way of individualising teaching and learning. The complex method was not regarded by spokesmen in the USA or in the USSR to be the same as

the project method in the USA. Carleton Washbourne deplored the lack of adaptation of methods of teaching to the differences between pupils, in spite of the fact that Dewey maintained that the Soviet Union has not made the mistake of confusing unity of education with uniformity: 'on the contrary, centralisation is limited to the matter of ultimate aim and spirit, while in detail, diversification is permitted, or rather encouraged'. He held, however, that the 'complex method involves a confused intellectual scheme of organisation (which) centres round the study of human work' and reported that many American projects are regarded in the USSR as casual and trivial. Thus, while in the early days American and Soviet educators were interested in individualising teaching methods, different approaches were suggested. It would be difficult to find an example in a Soviet school of the kind of activity methods of learning and teaching now to be observed in many English primary schools or easily to observe in the USSR methods of teaching characterised by experimentation in science lessons conducted in many English sixth forms.

Associated with methods of teaching is learning theory. Piaget's work has been much discussed and his theory of biological development stages partially accepted, but modified, to take more account of environmental stimuli. The simple Pavlovian stimulus and response theory does not adequately explain how individuals in a socialist and communist society can not only respond to the environment but anticipate problems and control their destinies. In the face of this dilemma, without abandoning a materialistic view of psychology, Pavlov's second signal theory, which permits the cortex to develop, store and initiate responses, has found favour. The ability of the cortex to develop in this way offers a theory that can be associated with Vygotsky's theory, that language and thought are intimately related. The view that they could be separated was apparently officially refuted by Stalin. Luria and Leont'ev developed Vygotsky's theories, and thought that intelligent behaviour could be identified with the use of words.

Considerable attention is paid to the work of Vygotsky by non-Soviet socio-linguistics. This is a field into which I am not competent to enter except in very general terms. Throughout the history of the Soviet Union it is apparent that debate among psychologists, and between them and educational psychologists, has never been entirely absent. The public rejection of many features of Western psychology, particularly the theory of innate and unchangeable ability, measurable by IQ and psychological tests, has been well documented in foreign

literature. As the residues of capitalism fade and the material standards of living in the environment improve, relations between biological development, the stimuli received from the environment and the role of education raise issues that were examined over a long period of time by Zankov and his colleagues. The rehabilitation of Pavlov and his second signal theory and Vygotsky's theories contributed to a pattern of language and psychological theories that suggested the whole socio-historical experience of mankind could be passed on through the use of language. This, of course, is an important justification of Lenin's view.

Linked with these linguistic and psychological theories is the question whether development and learning are independent. The main finding of the Zankov research, it seems to me, was that education could precede development and that learning associated with language was not as dependent on biological development as some Western psychologists might think.

## LANGUAGE POLICIES AND NATIONAL UNITY

This brief and inadequate excursion into a field in which there is a great deal of foreign analysis is linked with the last point I want to raise. Language theory is intimately linked with second language learning and Glyn Lewis (*Multi-lingualism in the Soviet Union*, 1972) has analysed the relations between mother-tongue instruction and learning a second language.

Other aspects of policy have been well researched in Germany. From my perspective, however, Lewis's analysis of language and policy and the phases through which it has passed during the last sixty years illustrates the political risks taken in a so-called monolithic state and the extent to which policies have oscillated between attempts to satisfy the cultural and linguistic aspirations of parents and nationality groups or to Russify the country and ensure a federal (Soviet national) consciousness and loyalty. Lewis argues that 'Politically, language is recognised as the main criterion of nationality in the USSR and for this reason the administrative boundaries, whether those of Union Republics, or within such republics, Autonomous Republics, Oblast (national provinces), Okrug (national areas), or Rayony (national districts) reflect broad linguistic divides' (Lewis, p. 50).

Lewis goes on to state that while people accept one language for one reason and another for another reason and that there are central and

peripheral languages, the dangers to political unity of permitting people in a vast territory to retain their own identity by the perpetuation of their language and culture are apparent. Cultural inertia and history favour the use of national languages. The use of these also gains support from the notion of proletarian literacy. The development of new alphabets and literature reflects the individual interest side of the synergy equation. The promotion of modern technology and the centralisation of power in Russia suggest that Russian should become the *lingua franca*. The early tolerance of nationalities and national languages was modified after 1927, when members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party recognised the dangers of a growth of petty bourgeois nationalism. During the Second World War Soviet patriotism was stressed and by intention developed through the Russian language. Centralising tendencies strengthened this approach to language policy. Within the Party there was apparently a vigorous expression of opposing views, and during Khrushchev's period of office proposals were made to rationalise the place of several languages in the curriculum. Kairov, however, as President of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, held that Russian and the native language should be obligatory.

These debates cast doubts on the oft-expressed concept of Soviet totalitarian politics. Language policy clearly has its political component and is related to the centralising and decentralising tendencies that can be discerned from time to time. For example, at the 20th Party Congress in 1956 proposals were made to transfer power from the centre to the republics. The encouragement of diversity is now, however, simply a political question. The movement of population from rural to urban areas and the existence of schools in which several nationalities and languages may be represented create pedagogical problems that are now familiar to us in England, particularly in the large conurbations. At the 24th Party Congress Brezhnev recognised that 'Everybody in the Soviet Union, in varying degrees, participates in the two cultures' (*Soviet Union*, p. 82).

The reconciliation of cultural diversity and national political unity cannot, as in the case of the other problems I have mentioned, be resolved by fiat. By the same token, a fine balance cannot easily be drawn theoretically or in practice between the promotion of individual interests to benefit society and the promotion of societal aims, which will benefit individuals. It seems apparent that theoretical debates have gone on within the Party and among members of the educational establishment (which are not quite synonymous) on most issues of

educational policy – aims, administration, finance, the organisation and structure of the school system and the curriculum. On some of the issues, even within a general Marxist–Leninist framework, debates have been more vigorous and prolonged than on others. The debates have included pedagogical and political components. I think it would be useful for scholars increasingly to draw distinctions between these two components in the complex processes of party political and educational politics.

Finally, perhaps the early Bolsheviks were correct in believing that teachers are the most stubborn opponents of change and that through the ups and downs of theoretical debate and the political changes that have occurred they have carried on in the classroom much as before. Only in some areas, notably second-language teaching, has it been possible for me over the years to identify a typically Soviet teacher, who, as a result of his or her political commitment, and indeed consciousness, performs in a radically different way from many classroom teachers I have observed in Western Europe and North America. If anything, most Soviet teachers perpetuate the traditions of education more strongly than their contemporaries in other countries who share similar historical roots.

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# 4 Education in the Family and Family Policy in the Soviet Union

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## FAMILY POLICY AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY

In our Western societies we are living in a period in which we are confronted with the costs and limits of the following: economic planning and growth, the expanded state system of social policy, and expansion in the formal educational system. In this situation the search for quality instead of quantity, the search for private and grass-roots, instead of state, initiative, and the search for informal instead of formal settings for education and learning seem to be growing in importance. There is a widespread awareness that we have, by means of quantitative growth and expansion, created structures of economy, policy and education that have been shown to be unable to satisfy basic human needs, needs as reflected, for example, in the well-known hierarchy of Maslow. In this context of a change of conditions and attitudes, certain topics – partly new, partly old – seem to gain a new priority in policy. One example of a new topic of this sort is environmental policy and education, and one example of the new priority of an old topic is family policy and education.

The family is, on the one hand, not to be seen as an element of the educational system; what happens in families, by their very nature, cannot be planned or controlled by means of curricula, professional standards or examinations. Education in the family is not the object of direct public policy in the same sense as education in schools. On the other hand, the family has to be seen as the basic institution of society. It plays the decisive role not only in the physical reproduction of population but also in socialisation and education. In fulfilling these

functions the family depends on objective socio-economic conditions as well as on such individual conditions as one's knowledge and attitudes. Education in the family can thus become the object of public policy, in the sense of an indirect policy that tries to influence the aforementioned objective and individual conditions under which the family functions.

These notions are necessary in order to understand why family policy and educational policy have developed as different and separate fields of action. However, these two areas of public policy are connected by a common goal, namely, the support and shaping of the young, growing-up generation. Speaking about children, we can state that childhood in modern societies reflects a bipolar existence: there is family childhood, on the one hand, and school childhood, on the other. It is one of the problems of modern education that these two worlds of childhood tend to become more and more separated, the one being defined as the stronghold of privacy and the centre of everyday life, the other being shaped as an artificial and formalised setting for learning. One could say, therefore, that educational policy and family policy represent strategies for the reintegration of these two worlds of childhood. Educational policy would try, then, to bring back the elements of everyday life to the school, and family policy to bring the family nearer to public life. To look at the same thing from another perspective, one can say that educational policy and the educational system could contribute to the improvement of knowledge and attitudes as factors conditioning education in the family, whereas family policy, by improving the objective conditions of family life, could add to the ability to profit from the learning process within the formal educational system.

We can add to this that education, seen in a historical perspective, has tended to become more and more professionalised, in the sense that interaction with children has had to be increasingly guided by knowledge and competence. This tendency towards professionalisation has thus extended from public education to the field of family education. There are attempts to develop strategies of parent training similar to strategies of teacher training. For example, the German authorities launched a project in the 1970s under the title *Elternführerschein* (driving licence for parents), and the Soviet authorities developed a so-called *programma-minimum* for parent education in the 1960s (Liegle, p. 72). We can state, therefore, that educational policy and family policy, being established as separate fields of action in the modern welfare state, are interconnected not

only in respect of common goals but also, at least partly, by similar strategies of action.

## FAMILY POLICY AS A REACTION TO SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Referring, in this respect, to the Soviet Union, we can state that there, as in Western countries, family policy is a well-established field of action. We have to ask, however, whether, within this field, changes have occurred in the last decades and whether further changes can be foreseen in the 1980s. In order to answer this question we should distinguish between family policy as an *active* strategy, which tries to shape the social reality of the family in a predefined direction, and family policy as a *reactive* strategy, which tries to react to those social problems and to influence those objective and individual conditions of family life and education that work against the predefined goal. In the first case, referring to active family policy, I would assume that major changes did not, and will not, occur in the Soviet Union: the goal, generally speaking, to establish an effective family group as a loyal cell of the socialist society, has been essentially the same since the 1936 laws for the stabilisation of marriage and the family and will be essentially the same in the 1980s. In the second case, however, referring to family policy as a reactive strategy, I want to demonstrate the occurrence of certain changes that characterise the transition from the 1970s to the 1980s and that can be interpreted as reactions (new reactions in part) to changing social problems and to the changing objective and individual conditions of family life. I will discuss Soviet family policy mainly in this sense of a reactive strategy.

Let me begin with the changing social problems and the changing conditions of family life to which policy reacts. One of these problems has been already mentioned in my introductory remarks, namely the costs and limits of economic growth. More evidence of such general social problems is to be found in the recent Soviet literature on the family. For example, Kharchev, the leading figure in this field, has worked out the following characteristics of the present stage of development of society:

. . . on the one hand more will be demanded from the people and, consequently, from their education, and on the other, we will have to face growing complexities of the conditions of education in

connection with the growth of big cities, the mass migration of population, the increase in the volume of information and other consequences of the scientific-technical revolution (*Sem'ya i obshchestvo*, p. 18).

These are very global notions, whose relevance to family and family policy seems not to be directly self-evident.

A more differentiated answer can be given to the question of the past and anticipated future changes in family education and policy if this question is directed towards the relevant conditions of parent–child interaction and towards the changing position of children in the social world of today. Many of the authors in the field of family research have devoted parts of their interpretations of empirical data to this question, and we can find here similar evidence, generally speaking, concerning the developments in the post-industrial societies, including our own.

To cite Kharchev again:

Nowadays, the child develops much faster than some decades ago, because it is daily confronted by direct communication and by television and radio with so much information as in earlier times over months or years. Consequently there is less time for inner concentration, less possibility for the development of phantasy and imagination . . .

. . . Urbanization, which destroys the directness and regularity of man's contact with nature, claims additional measures from society, in order to compensate for this loss . . .

. . . Life in the cities makes the out-of-home and out-of-school behaviour of children today, more than ever before, independent of the direct control of grown-ups . . . (*Sem'ya i obshchestvo*, p. 18).

We can add to this numerous factors of stress within everyday life, discussed in Soviet literature, as, for example: the high density and scarcity of living quarters; the lack of time for parent–child interaction inside the family because of the out-of-home work of both parents; the heavy burden of household duties and shopping; the stress of learning within and outside the school; and the general rise in the standards of living, connected with the rise of materialistic orientation and a loss of social contacts. The development in the conditions of family life and education can be perceived as a change in what Urie Bronfenbrenner calls the ecology of human development.

There are manifold phenomena of the crisis in family life and education, which can be, and are, interpreted as indirect, and direct, consequences of the abovementioned changes in the ecology of human development by Soviet experts. For example, one out of three marriages ends in divorce (cf. Bodalev); families tend to be childless or to have only one child (*Sem'ya sevodniya*, p. 114); a growing number of grown-ups and youths react to the stress factors of a more and more complicated world by alcoholism, neurosis and other forms of what is called deviant behaviour. In this context, public policy towards the family today is an instrument designed to diminish the negative consequences of scientific-technical development, economic growth and social change, i.e. an instrument of crisis management whose positive purpose it is to improve the living conditions and ecology of families and children.

We have argued so far that family policy reacts to social change and problems. We should ask, in concluding this section, why it is the family that gets priority in political action and not, for example, the school or the sphere of work. One argument, proposed by Kharchev (and other Soviet authors), is that the family represents 'not simply a most important, but a necessary and quite specific, component in the socialisation of children' (*Sem'ya i obshchestvo*, p. 18), and that this is especially true under the conditions of a changing and increasingly complex world.

This would mean, firstly, that society has to rely on the family as the basic institution of socialisation and, this being so, that support for the family is of public interest. This would mean, secondly, that the family is perceived by the people themselves as the centre of their lives, as the main factor in self-realisation and education. Relating to this second aspect, Kharchev cites two recent investigations into which social factor is seen as having the most important influence on education. The answer of 959 respondents – managers of industrial and agricultural enterprises – showed the following order of social factors: (1) family, (2) school, (3) mass communication, (4) social organisations and work collectives, (5) comrades and friends, (6) self-education, and (7) literature and the arts. A similar preference for the family over other social factors was found in a questionnaire whose respondents were 1669 university students and pupils in 'tekhnikumy' (*Sem'ya i obshchestvo*, p. 17). There is additional evidence from investigations into the hierarchy of values in the young generation that here, too, the family ranks first, with 'peace' being the second in the hierarchy. This being so, support for the family by means of public

policy seems to be an apt response not only to public interests but to individual needs, preferences and values as well.

## THE SOVIET MODEL OF FAMILY POLICY

My second point relates to the question of which model of family policy is used in the Soviet Union in order to facilitate solutions to the social problems mentioned above, and whether this model has undergone changes in recent times. Any model of family policy has to be analysed in at least three dimensions: (1) the dimension of aims, (2) the dimension of instrumental means, and (3) the dimension of actors.

Referring to the aims of family policy, I would like to repeat my notion that, in this dimension, one finds a rather strong continuity in Soviet policies since 1936, as well as a rather obvious similarity of Soviet policy to family policies in Western countries, namely, the stabilisation of marriage and the family, and support for the care and education of children within and outside the family. There is, in my view, only one point in the dimension of aims that is worth mentioning in respect of change: since the 1970s the Soviet authorities claim more outspokenly than in the past the improvement of demographic development to be the main aim of family policy. This old–new trend is a very clear example of the abovementioned fact that family policy has to be seen as a reaction to social problems, the social problem being defined here by the unsatisfactory demographic development of Soviet society. The interconnection of family policy and population development is a well-known phenomenon, not only in the Soviet Union, and I will come back to this later.

Of more interest is the second dimension: the policies towards the family and children. Here we have to identify, roughly speaking, two strategies, income strategy and service strategy. The first is meant to improve the material situation of spouses, of parents and children and of the whole family system by direct and indirect payments. It comprises measures like credits for young couples, leave of absence from work for pregnant women and young mothers, child allowances, tax reductions for families with several children, housing programmes and so forth. The second type of strategy is meant to improve and to complete the functions of the family – mainly household and child care – by the establishment of a network of social services. It comprises measures like public eating-houses, health services, day-care institutions, schools with a prolonged day, counselling services and so

forth. It has been, and continues to be, characteristic for family policy, not only in the Soviet Union but also elsewhere, that both these strategies are used at the same time. However, there are different orientations to be found within the income and the service strategy as well as in the way both are combined. It is my impression that Soviet family policy is at present undergoing a remarkable change in respect of such orientations, a change whose consequences will become clear only during the 1980s.

The combination of income and service strategies in Soviet family policy has until recently shown the following features: income strategies have concentrated on direct payments, whereas service strategies have concentrated on the expansion of institutional child care and education. Meanwhile, there have been signs of new orientations. Within the income strategy, mothers' leave of absence from work and, thereby, the time for mother-child interaction, has been remarkably expanded. Within the service strategy, support systems for mothers and children such as prevention, counselling and education, get similar attention to the expansion of institutional care and education. Both developments point, in my view, to the same direction and tendency, namely, to a higher evaluation of the family as a socialising and educative agent – in other words, to a support system that is meant to improve the conditions of parent-child interaction and child care *inside* the family. I would like to come back to this tendency in the concluding section. At this point I want only to speculate that this new type of family policy has been chosen by Soviet authorities on the assumption that it will prove an adequate means for reaching the main aim of the present family policy: to motivate women to have more children.

Before I continue with the demographic aspect of family policy, I have to describe the third dimension of the actors in family policy. This can be done in a few words. In contrast to the traditions in Western societies, the whole spectrum of support systems in Soviet family policy is managed by public organisations and agencies and controlled by administrative or Party authorities. Considering the costs of bureaucratisation, as, for example, in educational policy and in the educational system, one can speculate that such a model is apt to create certain problems for those who are the consumers of these services. This is the well-known problem of public social services – that support is always connected with social control.

So far, I have tried to characterise the Soviet model of family policy, its changes through time and its common and different traits in

comparison with other models. For this purpose I have introduced the three dimensions. Clearly, this can only be an analytical distinction. Therefore, in the following and in the concluding section, I will try to give a more integrative view of the aims and instruments of Soviet policies towards the family and children, concentrating here on some of the abovementioned new tendencies.

## NEW TRENDS IN SOVIET FAMILY POLICY

### **A positive Demographic Policy**

Starting with the demographic aspect, we can state that the aim of raising the birth rate became paramount in Soviet policy, as in family policies elsewhere, in the 1970s. It has been mentioned already that the new element is not this aim in itself but its outspokenness. Brezhnev, in his introductory speech at the 26th Party Congress, ascribed 'serious attention to the elaboration and realization of an effective demographic policy, to the problems of population development, which sharpened in recent times' (*Materialy*, p. 54). As the most important means for the solution of these problems, Brezhnev pointed to the strengthening of support for the family, young couples and, mainly, for women. He continued with the argument that, in this field, broader and more effective measures were necessary, the following measures being of special relevance:

- 1 The introduction of partly paid leave from work for child care during the first year of life and of part-time work for mothers with young children.
- 2 The expansion and improvement of pre-school institutions, of schools with a prolonged day and of household services.
- 3 The raising of child allowances, mainly in connection with the birth of a second or third child.

Already some time before the opening of the 26th Party Congress, a Decree of the Central Committee and Council of Ministers was published which described the details of future demographic and family policies. I would like to come back to this document in my last section. At this point, let me turn to the local level as an illustrative example of a family policy aimed at raising the birth rate. It is well known that demographic problems are concentrated in the European

parts of the Soviet Union and mainly in the big cities. Moscow, with its 8 million inhabitants, has the lowest birth rate of the whole Soviet Union. Relevant research has shown that 81 per cent of families have either no or only one child and that the average number of wanted children is 1.8. There is no natural reproduction of the Moscow population, the growth of which is due only to migration (*Sem'ya sevodniya*, p. 14). Reacting to this, Moscow Party and administrative authorities launched a 'Plan of measures for the improvement of the demographic situation and for stimulation of natural population growth of Moscow city' in September 1977. It is interesting to look briefly at the strategies and the character of the measures proposed by this plan for local family policy. The plan comprises four sections. The first section deals with the improvement of housing conditions for young families. It is said that a separate living place has to be seen as one of the most important preconditions for the establishment and development of a modern family. Some relevant measures giving young couples the right to an apartment are proposed. This clear prominence of the measures, which relate to the ecological dimension of family life and family education, is a relatively new phenomenon in Soviet family policy. It has to be seen as a reaction to the research evidence, which points to a positive correlation between marriage stability and the birth rate on the one side and the quality of housing on the other.

The second section of the plan deals with the expansion and improvement of institutions of pre-school education and other services for families and children. Here we find the continuation of a traditional strategy of Soviet educational and family policy, namely, a service strategy aiming at facilitating women's and mothers' productive work by freeing them from some of the child care and household duties by means of the establishment of public services. A new element within this strategy can be found in the Moscow plan, in that it proposes to establish experimentally two to three so-called 'house-rooms' for children in each city sector of Moscow, so that special services for family child care (e.g. the supply of milk and other baby-food) can be supplied.

The third section of the plan can be seen as a further specification of the second one, in so far as it deals with the expansion and improvement of public health services.

Of more interest is the last section of the plan, which proposes a whole set of measures for what is called educational propaganda in the population, relating to problems of sociology and demography, to

programmes for hygiene and sex education and to courses about the Soviet family and its juridical and moral foundations. We can see here that within family policy instruments of a non-economic, educational nature get increasing attention.

### **Support systems for Education within the Family and towards the Family**

In this section, let me turn to a second new tendency in Soviet family policy, the consequences of which will become clear only during the 1980s. It can be characterised as follows. The aim of support and stabilisation of the family system is secured not by an income but by a service strategy, which uses the instrument of counselling instead of institutionalised education outside the family, and is directed towards the parents instead of the children.

Obviously, this approach is not new in itself. Starting with Makarenko's *Book for Parents* and up to the abovementioned *Programma-minimum for Parent Education for the Folk Universities*, there have been different activities in this field. The new phenomenon is the status of this approach within the whole field of family policy and the new orientation towards psychological/psychiatric methods, which had been taboo since the 1936 'Pedology' document under Stalin.

Fundamental to this new and newly stressed approach is the different diagnosis of family deficits in the socialist society. A. A. Bodalev, one of the leading psychologists, has stressed that whereas in earlier times the term 'neblagopoluchnaya sem'ya' was associated mainly with the material situation, 'now another factor becomes prominent: the instability of relations within the family, the conflicts between father and mother. Now attention is paid to the emotional climate in the family which is detrimental for the child' (Kussmann, p. 8).

The largest chapter of a booklet entitled *Family and Society*, which appeared in 1982, is on 'Social-therapeutic activity in the field of marriage and family relations'. One argument in favour of this new orientation, presented in the first paragraph, is that changes in the family structure and relations, such as the strengthening of equality and equal rights of the sexes, lead to a situation in which conflicts can no longer be solved by traditional means, namely, formal authority, but only by the development of new ways of bargaining. A second argument is that the need for psychological support of the individual

has grown under the stress-inducing conditions of the scientific-technical revolution, and that in this context especially the family acquires an ever more important meaning. On the basis of these two arguments, the growing necessity for the establishment of counselling and therapeutic services is put forward:

In the scientific literature of the last years the question of the necessity to establish in our country support services for the family has been judged unanimously. This is convincingly shown by the experiences of consulting agencies and cabinets for problems of family life which were collected in the last years. Until recently, the majority of these agencies had the character of social experiments . . . . Meanwhile, the experts are confronted with the task of analysing and generalising experience which has been gathered in our country and in other socialist countries, as well as critically evaluating the experience of family therapy, which has been developed in capitalist countries. The aim is to establish organizational settings of family services which are optimal under the conditions prevalent in our socialist countries (*Sem'ya i obshchestvo*, p. 100).

The main sections of the article, a resumé of which is given here, refer to the different types of counselling and family therapy that are to be found, mainly in American literature. It is astonishing, by the way, to observe that the evaluation of foreign experience in this field is concentrated on Western countries, in spite of the fact that the German Democratic Republic, for example, has developed quite a reputation in the field of counselling and therapy. One gets the impression that Soviet authorities orientate their policy, as, for instance, in the field of socialisation theory, in the field of behavioural and social science at large and in the field of science generally, according to the most developed standards to be found. In this respect, the introduction of concepts and strategies developed in Western countries (mainly the USA) is striking, even if one considers the critical notes that accompany this process of adaptation. Only in the last paragraphs of the cited article do the authors come back to experiences gathered in the Soviet Union, and here they refer mainly to the tradition (since 1962) of family counselling in the Latvian SSR, where the emphasis is on the preparation of youth for marriage and family life by special courses for tenth-graders in secondary schools. This model of, so to speak, anticipatory counselling and education is

judged as a very important and successful instrument for mediating what is called 'psikhologicheskaya gramotnost' of future spouses and parents, for the stabilisation of marriage and family. The article ends with the following statements:

Giving therapeutic help to the family must be seen as a most important and fundamental component of a family support service. It must be exercised at all stages of the life cycle of the family and include manifold working methods, patterns and approaches. It is the function of family therapy to give universal help to the family, so that the family can successfully fulfil its numerous functions, guarantee the physical and psychic health of all its members and pave the way to a harmonic development of the personalities of the spouses and their children (*Sem'ya i obshchestvo*, p. 120).

If this tendency to establish consulting–therapeutic services for the family is pursued, I would not hesitate to interpret it as one of the symptoms of a turning point and a new pattern of Marxist thinking on man, on human nature and on personality development. This tendency expresses no less than the conviction that the self-realisation of man cannot be defined in terms of macro-sociological and economic categories, in terms of participation in society and mainly in the sphere of work. On the contrary, society and the work sphere, as moulded by the progress of the scientific–technical revolution, are more and more perceived in terms of their ambivalent consequences for self-realisation. Instead, the micro-social networks and relations, the interpersonal conditions and determinants as the basis of self-realisation, are stressed. It is not only the good (socialist) society which leads to satisfying human relations; human relations and mental health become aims in themselves, which have to be furthered by public support systems, not of an economic nature, but of an educative, consulting, therapeutic and ecological nature.

This statement sounds rather overdone. Let me, therefore, apart from philosophical speculations, come to some representative examples of action within the political system which can show that, with the beginning of the 1980s, Soviet policies towards the family have included new stresses in line with what I have tried to derive from the literature so far.

There is, first, the foundation of an All Union Guidance Council Centre within the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the USSR in 1980. (The establishment of this Centre is to be seen in the context of

recommendations made both by the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and by the Research Institute for Psychology in the APN in 1978. The first referred to the establishment of public psychological services generally; the second put forward a proposal to set up a 'clinic' for psychological diagnosis and counselling, in which the professional profile of the 'counselling psychologist' could also be developed.)

The newly found Centre is intended to combine empirical research and practical counselling. As far as practical counselling in the field of marriage and family problems is concerned, one can find prototypes of such a Centre in the Latvian SSR and Leningrad, although they are mainly to be found in other socialist countries – 200 in the German Democratic Republic, forty-seven in Czechoslovakia, and thirty in Poland (Kusmann, p. 21).

Referring to the Leningrad experience, A. G. Kharchev, the leading figure in Soviet family research, stated in his book *Marriage and the Family in the USSR* in 1979:

. . . It is not by chance that the questions of adaptation of young people to the conditions of family life become more and more important in scientific research work, as well as in practice . . . Regarding situations connected with the infringement of moral norms in the family, it is evidently necessary to exercise particular caution and consideration, not only in respect of the possible positive, but also of the possible negative consequences of intervention. Most appropriate to all these demands is a system of individualised consultations of psychologists and sexologists. This system must rest upon territorial counselling centres and at the same time be placed in a certain cooperative relationship with psychological services in enterprises (Kharchev, 1979, pp. 202–3).

My first example, the establishment of the first All Union Guidance Council Centre in Moscow, and the comments on it made by Kharchev and Bodalev, point to the following facts:

- 1 This Centre can be seen as a basis and official starting point for the introduction of a new family support system in the Soviet Union.
- 2 The future development of this support system seems to be characterised by the aim of establishing a growing number of decentralised services.

- 3 The concept and approach of counselling points to the conviction that family policy should act not only on the macro-system level but also on the levels of the meso- and micro-system.
- 4 This support system does not rely primarily on economic and political measures of intervention but on educative, counselling and therapeutic measures.

A second example of the new orientation of Soviet policies towards the family is the whole package of measures laid down in a Decree of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the USSR on 22 January 1981 under the title 'On measures for strengthening governmental aid to families with children'. The majority of these measures is consistent with the tradition of Soviet family policy since 1936 and refers to the improvement of the economic and ecological conditions of family life (child allowances, other payments and credits in connection with childbirth, housing programmes, especially for young families, etc.) and to the expansion of child care and health services (cribs, kindergartens, prolonged school-days, prophylactic and counselling agencies for pregnant women, etc.). There are two groups of measures, however, which seem to signalise new trends in Soviet family policy.

One is what the Decree calls measures with the aim of creating more favourable possibilities for maternal care for newly born and young children'. The Soviet government adapts, under this title, the example of other communist states in conceding paid leave from work for mothers for the care of a child up to the end of the first year of life; further unpaid leave, connected with a guarantee for keeping the prior job assignment, is recommended for six months, and, in the future, for the whole second year of the life of a child. Additional measures are the expansion of part-time work for women with children and an additional three days' paid leave for women with two or more children under the age of twelve. (It is interesting to note, by the way, that in a country where equality of the sexes is one of the prominent aims, the expansion of time for child care within the family is exclusively defined within the context of female rights and duties.)

The other group is what the Decree calls measures 'in the field of improving propaganda and educational work'. The aims mentioned here are to expand knowledge about the family 'as one of the highest moral values in socialist society, to give more attention to the strengthening of the prestige of motherhood and to the stabilisation of marriage and family relations and to create an atmosphere of higher

care and respect for families with children'. As instruments for realising these aims, the government recommends the introduction of obligatory lessons on the psychology and ethics of family life and hygiene and sex education for boys and girls into the curricula of higher classes of the general and professional educational system. In addition, the Komsomol is invited to improve its work with young people in the fields of the propagation of a socialist life-style, of the development of feelings of responsibility towards family and society, and the development of respectful relations with girls, women, mothers and the aged.

These measures, announced in a Decree that has to be seen in the context of the 26th Congress of the CPSU, points to the following conclusions:

- 1 Soviet family policy in the 1980s shows a new tendency of shortening the work time of women in favour of time that can be used for family tasks. Of special interest here is the paid leave from work during the first year of life of a child. In virtue of this measure child care within the family gets a new public prestige and an additional incentive for parenthood is striven for.
- 2 Soviet family policy in the 1980s strengthens the tendency to add to the traditional economic instruments a group of instruments of an educative nature. Of special interest here is the introduction and improvement of anticipatory parent education in schools and youth organisations. By this it is made clear that the quality of marriage and family relations and the quality of education in the family are not only dependent on macro-system conditions but also on factors like knowledge and attitudes.

## FAMILY POLICY AND SOCIAL CONTROL – CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

If one looks back to what I have called new trends in Soviet family policy in the 1980s, one gets the impression that aims and instruments in this field of political action show a diminishing difference between East and West. This impression holds true if one tries to identify some of the common characteristics of family policy, such as:

- 1 The present predominance of an active demographic policy.
- 2 The aim to support the family system mainly in the field of child care and especially during the first years of the life of children.

- 3 The development of a differentiated policy according to the life-cycle of the family, with special attention to the young family.
- 4 The expansion of services for the out-of-family care of children.
- 5 The introduction of counselling and therapeutic services for spouses and parents and the decentralisation of such services.
- 6 The introduction and improvement of different forms of anticipatory education for marriage and parenthood.
- 7 The combination of economic with educative, counselling and therapeutic instruments, and the attention to the micro- and meso-system variables, which influence the quality of education in the family.

Besides these common traits of strategies of family policy in East and West, there remain, however, clear differences. One decisive difference has already been mentioned, namely, the role of the political administration and the Party at all levels – All-Union, republic, regional and local – and in all dimensions of family policy, including services for children and families. Whereas in Western countries we have a tradition of non-state activity and private initiative and responsibility mainly in the areas of child care and counselling services, the Soviet tradition of state activity and Party control has remained unbroken. In spite of the facts that decentralisation is furthered and that the needs of the people to find self-realisation, not in the work sphere and society at large but rather in the micro- and meso-milieu of family and community, is supported by different measures, there is no example of any activity in the area of family policy where support systems work outside the formal system. One gets the impression that it is just because the family ranks so highly in the value hierarchy of people that the political system is anxious, by supporting the realisation of this value, not to lose control over people's loyalty.

Let me conclude with some more general remarks. We are used to perceiving modern society as one in rapid change. Indeed, the transformation of conditions is a continuing process, influenced by what is called the scientific-technical revolution. On the other hand, the solutions to all those human problems that have developed as by-products of socio-economic change seem to be traditional ones, seem to display continuity with, or even the tendency to return to, old values. One example of this phenomenon is the old-new priority, which the family, as social group and socialising agent, has assumed in the context of socio-economic and educational policy and planning.

This is true not only for the Soviet Union but also for many societies in the East and West. I have the impression, however, that for the Soviet society this reorientation towards the family is of special importance. The Soviet model of planned socio-economic change is characterised by an extremely high degree of centralisation, bureaucratisation and control, which is obviously unable to motivate private initiative and creative solutions. In this context the family, as the only social setting in which self-determination is relevant, becomes especially important, not only for individual self-realisation but also for the functioning of society at large. It is interesting to note that, under these conditions, the family itself did not and does not undergo much social change. It is the traditional nuclear family group, with a high degree of sex-role differentiation and parent-child hierarchy, which is prominent and which is supported by public policies. The socialist dreams of new life-styles, of collective life and of collective education, once experimented with during the 1920s, have turned into a reality in which a bourgeois type of nuclear family has become the stronghold of personal and social identity, easing, as it does, the growing experiences of alienation in society at large. Present family policy is, so to speak, a reaction to this situation of the marginal man.

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# 5 Bilingualism as Language Planning in the Soviet Union

GLYN LEWIS

## FOREIGN LANGUAGES

There is no lack of interest in the teaching of foreign languages in the USSR, and the standard of achievement in those languages where they are taught (and used at certain points in the curriculum) is as high, if not higher, than in most Western countries. In 1954 several large cities in the Ukraine and Russia began introducing a foreign language (usually English) to children of seven years of age. They were expected to learn about 200 words in the first year. Following the establishment of these classes and in order to facilitate the work for the seven year-olds, a number of kindergartens introduced a foreign language at the age of six (some at the age of five or even four). There was some opposition from such researchers as Ginsberg, but in spite of the expressed reservations, within eight years Moscow alone had 500 such kindergartens in which 20,000 children of six years or under were introduced to English. A smaller number of schools introduced German and French. In 1961 the Union Republic Council of Ministers was instructed to introduce a foreign language as a medium of instruction in 700 general education schools; a subject like geography was taught in a foreign language in the sixth grade (thirteen years), contemporary history in grades seven or eight and in the last (pre-university) grade science and technology were taught for three hours a week partly in a foreign language.

Teachers of foreign languages are well trained in many foreign language institutes across the Soviet Union, the most prestigious being the Hertsen Institute of the University of Leningrad and the First

Moscow Pedagogical Institute for Foreign Languages. The Tbilisi Institute for Foreign Languages was founded in 1948 and is typical of such institutes in other Union republics, like those at Alma-Ata and Erevan. Among the students at the Tbilisi Institute are representatives of over fifty nationalities of the Soviet Union. English, German and French were the languages taught originally; later Spanish, Italian and several Eastern European languages, such as Bulgarian, were introduced as secondary languages. The students devote 80 to 90 per cent of their time to the academic pursuit of their foreign language, the remaining 10 to 20 per cent being devoted to aspects of methodology, the psychology of language acquisition, sociological studies and ideological indoctrination.

In 1961–2 the USSR Council of Ministers determined that courses should be organised at universities and pedagogical institutes, where intending teachers of non-linguistic subjects, such as physics or mathematics, should be trained to teach their specialist subject in a foreign language (*Pravda*, 4.6.61). Nevertheless, the position of foreign languages in the USSR as a whole, and especially in rural schools, is far from satisfactory. In 1973 many students were reported to be disillusioned because of their failure to gain university entrance because their schools did not teach a foreign language. Even when foreign languages are taught, in very many schools, as the USSR Ministry of Education acknowledges, foreign languages are still being taught by people who have no specialist knowledge. In rural schools only about one-third of the teachers of foreign languages have a specialised higher education qualification.

Bilingual education is regarded in the Soviet Union as the teaching of an ability to speak two or more *Soviet* languages, and this is agreed by all Soviet commentators on the subject. The leading Soviet linguists, V. V. Vinogradov, Iu. D. Desheriev, U. U. Reshetov and V. A. Seribrennikov, in a joint report of the Alma-Ata Conference on 'Problems of the Development of Literary Languages of the USSR', defined bilingualism as 'possessing a knowledge of both one's own language and another, most often Russian'. Desheriev and his associates, writing in 1966, were even more emphatic on the necessity to include Russian. They spoke of bilingualism as 'the cultivation of the Russian language among non-Russian populations of the Soviet Union'. In a multi-national country, the second language, serving most often as the language of cross-national communication, is Russian, and a knowledge of that language plus the language of one's own ethnic group constitutes bilingualism. The supremacy of Russian over other

possible second languages is emphasised in the Programme of the CPSU, which states: 'The process occurring in life of the voluntary study, not only of one's native language, but of Russian, has a positive significance as it permits mutual exchange of experience and familiarization of each nation and nationality with the cultural achievements of all the other people of the USSR and world culture' (*Programma Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza*, p. 115).

In 1972 P. A. Azimov and others published a report on a conference held at Ashkabad on 'Trends in the Development of National Languages in Relation to the Development of Socialist Nationalities'. They concluded that 'the intensive process over the last fifty years or so of learning Russian alongside the vernacular in all Soviet Republics has led to the situation where bilingualism acquires not only linguistic but also increased social significance. Knowledge of Russian as the common (major) language makes it possible for all Soviet Nations to communicate freely with one another' (Azimov, p. 320). The emphasis on Russian as the necessary second language component of bilingualism has led many Soviet linguists, like Baskakov, to claim that 'in the new Socialist regime . . . Russian is now recognised by all as a second native language' (cf. Baskakov, 1969). Baskakov returned to this theme in 1973 when he made the distinction between 'bilingualism' and what he refers to as 'more complicated interlingual relations . . . of minorities who in addition to the Russian language also know the language of the basic indigenous Republic they reside in' (cf. Desheriev, 1965). Equally explicit in identifying bilingual education with the learning of Russian as a second language is the statement where the desired integration of the peoples of the USSR is referred to as 'the development of bilingualism, i.e. the non-Russian mastering Russian'.

Naturally, within any one Union republic the extent to which Russian has been learned as a second language varies. In surveys of a number of districts in Belorussia 76.7 per cent used Russian in addition to their native language (Ukrainian or Belorussian). Practically all the Gagauz people of the Karrat Raion of the Moldavian Republic had acquired Russian and many would also have learned the official language of the republic, Moldavian. Kholmogorov found that the average of Russian-related bilingualism in Latvia was 84 per cent, and, among the minorities inhabiting that republic, 98 per cent of the Belorussians, 85 per cent of the Poles, 96 per cent of the Ukrainians, 98 per cent of the Jews but only 52 per cent of the Lithuanians and 62 per cent of the Estonians had acquired Russian. The percentage among

the Letts was 78 (Kholmogorov, 1965). At the same time a high percentage of the non-indigenous population of Latvia had learned Lettish: among the Belorussians 67, Estonians 53, Poles 50, and Jews 43 per cent. Only the Russians have a low level of Lettish bilingualism: 31 per cent. It is not surprising that in Lithuania and Latvia the percentage of the non-indigenous bilinguals living in rural areas is much lower than it is in urban areas; in Latvia and Lithuania the respective figures are approximately 18 and 35 per cent in both cases.

The extent of bilingualism varies considerably from one nationality to another, according, first, to the level of economic and educational development. For example, it is low among Uygurs, Mansi, Itelmen, Yukagirs and Tuvin. Secondly, the nature and the length of the given nationality's contact with Russia is also important. Thus the numbers claiming Russian is high among the Nogai, Cherkess, and Adygei of the Caucasus, as well as among the Komi-Permyak and Mari within the Russian Republic and the Ossettes and Chuvash who have mixed freely with the Russians. A third factor promoting Russian as a second language is Russian penetration by immigration, as in the case of Kazakhstan. Finally, the possession of a native language that has been standardised and is the medium of a developed literary culture tends to discourage the acquisition of Russian, especially if the nation in question is relatively large. Such is the case of the Ukrainians, Uzbeks, Armenians, Azerbaydzhanis, Georgians, Tadzhiks, Kirgiz and the Baltic nations, where the percentage claiming Russian in each case is under 40 per cent. The extent of Russian-related bilingualism also varies according to age, though the age factor varies from republic to republic.

The identification of bilingualism with the acquisition of Russian should not blind us to the considerable degree of non-Russian-related bilingualism in the Soviet Union. In considering whether in any particular republic the degree of non-Russian bilingualism is high or low, we should take into account the fact that the maximum percentage is 45 per cent (Tsukhurs), followed closely by Kurds (32.2 per cent). The lowest level is among the Tuvin (0.4 per cent) and Ingush (0.9 per cent).

## THE ORGANISATION OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION – TYPES OF SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMMES

### **Demographic Complexities and Bilingualism**

According to the Statutes of the Secondary General–Education School–USSR Council of Ministers Resolution, 8 September 1970 ‘. . . pupils are given the opportunity to receive instruction in native language. Their parents or guardians have the right to select for their children a school of their choice with the appropriate language of instruction. In addition to the language in which instruction is conducted, pupils may choose to study the language of another people of the USSR’ (*Uchitel’skaya gazeta*, 15.9.1970).

However, the demographic composition of towns, cities and even small villages makes it difficult to allow such freedom of choice as this resolution implies. For instance, people belonging to more than 100 nationalities live in the Georgian Republic, and there are schools where the instruction is organised in separate tracks to provide for Armenian, Azerbaydzhan, Greek or Osset speaking children, and the different groups all learn Georgian and Russian. In 1974 there were 317 such multi-national schools in Kirgizia. All the schools in the cities of Daghestan recruit children from five to twenty-five nationalities. One school in Maikop (Krasnador region) is attended by children from twelve linguistic groups. In the 1976–7 school year there were at least 400 such schools in Daghestan, some of them in relatively small villages. The 508 children of one village represented sixteen nationalities, and every class in the village school was a complete cross-section of the heterogeneous village community. Such complexity not only makes a bilingual/multi-lingual education necessary but puts a premium on the use of the lingua franca as the teaching language.

### **Teaching Russian as a Second Language**

Twenty years after the resolution of the 7th Russian Conference of the Communist Party in April 1917 had called for the abolition of a compulsory state language, it was decreed that Russian should be taught to all students of the Soviet Union whatever their nationality. For some time after 1938 the teaching started in the third grade, but it

has been common practice for a long time for Russian to be introduced in the middle of the first class and not later than the second.

In spite of this early introduction, the professional journals, as recently as 1980, gave space to considerable criticism of the quality of Russian among students who are non-native speakers of the language. The Minister of Education for the Uzbek SSR, having stressed the fact that Russian is taught from the first to the tenth grade in all schools, that 14 per cent of school time is devoted to the language and that there were nearly 12,000 Russian-language teachers in the republic, concluded that a great deal remained to be done to raise attainment in Russian to even a moderately satisfactory standard. The Collegium of the USSR Ministry of Education criticised the quality of the results in Estonia. It was reported in 1975 that all pupils in the schools of Estonia were learning Russian, though officially it was an optional subject. However, the position was unsatisfactory in grades four to eight. Not all teachers were capable of inspiring their pupils, and it was stressed that the international character of the Russian language should be explained to the children to stimulate their interest. The first regional conference on the national organisation of the teaching of Russian to Tadzhik students took place in the Tadzhik State University in 1972. An experimental 280-hour course in Russian was suggested, together with a common curriculum and common textbooks for Russian in all Soviet schools, e.g. at Kishinev and Tashkent. Such conferences were common thereafter.

The attitude to Russian studies in the Georgian SSR lends itself to the most sustained attack of all. An editorial in *Zarya Vostoka* (10.7.73) follows a report of the February meeting of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party in which a long list of shortcomings was itemized. The editorial maintains that the quality of Russian teaching has deteriorated in the last fifteen years and that the training the teachers receive is unsatisfactory. The University of Tbilisi has ceased to take an interest in the problem and other measures are called for to retrain (*perepodgotovka*) the teachers of Russian and Russian literature. New textbooks and ancillary materials are called for. So bad is the position of Russian in Georgia, it is maintained, that members of the highest professions, leaders of the Komsomol and experts in economics have a very poor knowledge of the language.

The effect of this kind of situation in Georgia and other republics is that the planned programme of transfer from national language instruction to Russian is delayed because knowledge of the language does not reach the minimum standard necessary. Desheriev (1958)

criticises efforts that were made in the Volga and North Caucasus regions to transfer pupils from classes where teaching was in the native language to Russian medium classes, not because this step was undesirable but simply because it was impracticable – the ‘level of bilingualism in Russian and the national language was too low to make the transfer a practical proposition’. Partly because of the unsatisfactory quality of Russian, even at the end of higher education, the teaching of Russian was brought forward into pre-school classes; six-year-old children are now introduced to Russian in informal ways before they receive formal instruction in the mother tongue. From 1946 onwards the establishment of these classes was approved in Daghestan, as well as among the Buryats, Kabardins, and Yakuts. In 1965 Tbilisi saw the establishment of the first of these classes in Georgia.

### **Russian Language Schools for non-Russians**

Even during the period when the national languages were favourably regarded in education, schools where Russian was used as the sole medium of instruction to non-native speakers of the language were popular and formed one of the most important strands in the pattern of bilingual education. Theoretically, nevertheless, the tendency to make Russian the language of teaching rather than the subject of study was considered by some to be harmful and wrong. In spite of this, the percentage of Russian medium schools for non-Russians increased, so that by 1976 14 per cent of all Ukrainian schools, 27 per cent of Moldavian schools, 27 per cent of the schools in Latvia and over 40 per cent of Kazakh schools were of this character. In the cities the proportion of non-Russians attending Russian medium schools tended to be higher than the average. In Ashkhabad in 1980 87 per cent of the schools belonged to this category. Even if students begin attending elementary schools where they are taught in their native tongue the tendency is for them to transfer to Russian medium instruction, sometimes in the elementary school but most frequently when they enter or in the early grades of secondary school. In 1965–6 the transfer of all teaching from the native language to Russian was decreed in the Kabardin–Balkar ASSR, and this began with the transfer of 50 per cent of the second grade in all schools.

**The 'Integrated School' or Parallel Medium Instruction**

Recently integrated schools, where Russian and one other language (sometimes as many as four or five other languages) may be used to teach the different nationalities separately, have increased. The rationale that is offered for the integrated school is complex. In the first place these schools bear the hallmark of Lenin's approval. In 1913, with reference to the Jews of Odessa, he opposed separate schools, whether Russian or nationality schools, arguing that it was in the interests of the working class to unite children of all nationalities in integrated schools. Following this lead, parallel medium schools were popular in the 1920s. In the Ukraine 7 per cent of the children attended such schools and in Kharkov province the figure was as high as 49 per cent. These schools, e.g. Secondary School No. 55 in Riga, were, and still are, regarded as the cradles of international understanding.

Other reasons than the promotion of international understanding are held to justify the establishment of integrated schools. In those cases where schools carry instruction in three or more languages and where the numbers in any one ethnic or linguistic track are too small to make separate schools possible, and where the parents are disinclined to opt for the lingua franca, Russian, there is no option but to organise parallel classes. This is one of the main reasons for the establishment of such schools in Lithuania, where, in 1964, the Minister of Education stated that in 'every Lithuanian and Polish school . . . the children are taught in one of three languages – Polish, Russian or Lithuanian' (cf. Bruk). Children in some Bashkir schools are taught in one of six languages – Russian, Tatar, Bashkir, Chuvash, Mari or Udmurt.

The Baltic republics, especially Latvia, are the areas where integrated schools have flourished most successfully. By 1965–6 the number had been more than trebled, representing over a third of the total school population. The number of integrated schools in the republic during the same school year was 240 (Silver). However, there was a considerable difference in the treatment of Russian and Lettish as second languages. In the Lettish medium classes Russian was taught for 1,685 hours annually, while Lettish in Russian medium classes was taught for less than half that time, 830 hours annually. In spite of these differences, over 80 per cent of the Letts surveyed preferred integrated schools to other types of bilingual schools. Among the non-Letts surveyed the percentage who approved was even higher, 84.5 per cent. Only 3.8 per cent expressed their disapproval of integrated schools.

## **Native Languages**

Some of the native languages are not indigenous to a particular Union republic and they may be spoken by groups of immigrant populations of varying sizes. We have referred to some of these already: for instance, Armenians and Kazakhs in the Russian Republic. The following languages, whatever proportion of their speakers may be dispersed outside their eponymous republics, are taught and used only within those republics: Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Belorussian. In some cases, like those of the autonomous republics, they may be minority languages when considered against the total population of the Union republic, but within their own limited areas or autonomous republics, they tend to be the major language. Where this is the case, the use of the language is confined to the autonomous republic of which it is the basic language. Russian is the only language where the immigrant Russian minority has its own language schools in every republic. Of equal significance is the number of nationalities with very considerably dispersed populations constituting minorities who have no schools in which the language of the dispersed minority can be taught.

## **Extent of Provision for Native Languages in Education**

At present fifty-seven languages are used at different grades in the Soviet Union. The number of national schools in the Russian Republic in 1955–6 was 11,800, and these were attended by approximately one-third of the non-Russian population of the republic. In the Russian Republic in 1980, of the forty-two indigenous ethnic groups, sixteen did not have schools which used the language of the nationality at any stage. These included Kabardin, Balkar and Kalmyk, smaller groups like Adyge and Cherkess, and very small ones like Mansi, Eskimo, etc. Of the rest, only the Bashkirs and Tatars had schools where the national language was used from elementary through all secondary grades. Some, like Yakut schools, used the language through grade eight or grade seven (Yuvin) or grade six (Buryat). The remaining nationalities, where they did make use of their national language in education, confined it to the elementary grades and some only to the first grade. Two groups that are not indigenous to the Russian Republic, Armenian and Kazakh, have their own schools, where the national language is used right up to grade ten.

During the early years of the Soviet regime the national languages occupied a very prominent place in education. In 1927 over 93 per cent of the Ukrainian-speaking children received their elementary education in that language. In that year 83 per cent received their secondary education in Ukrainian, accounting for 73 per cent of the total child population of the Ukraine (Bilinsky, p. 418). Between 1959 and 1968 the number of schools using Ukrainian had declined from 84 to 82 per cent, but not all these schools made use of Ukrainian for more than two or three grades. The decline has been greater in urban schools. In 1965 there were only fifty-six schools in L'vov in which Ukrainian was used for some part of the course and these constituted only 65 per cent of the total. In Kiev, although speakers of Ukrainian represented 60 per cent of the total population, the schools in which Ukrainian was used provided for only 41 per cent of the child population. In Belorussia, in 1927, the situation was very similar to that of the Ukraine – 90 per cent of pupils were taught in their national language. In Georgia and Armenia 98 and 98.5 per cent respectively were taught in their native tongue. Among the Azerbaydzhanis (93.8 per cent), Tatars (77 per cent), Tadzhiks (54 per cent) the proportions tended to be lower, but higher than they are at present, if we take into account the fact that the schools which employ the national language for some grades at present transfer to Russian very much earlier than they did in the past. The decline is apparent also in the number of national languages that may be used in a Union republic. Thus, in the Uzbek SSR, Russian, Tadzhik, Kazakh, Tatar, Korean, Armenian, Yiddish and several other languages were used, as well as Uzbek, in 1935. In 1960–1 only Uzbek, Russian, Tadzhik, Kirgiz, Turkmen and Karakalpak were used, and this is the present position.

It is important to notice that while the type of school does have an association with differential social functioning of the languages, the influence of the national medium school is far less effective than the Russian medium school, especially on the choice of language for extra-mural reading, radio/TV and other cultural/occupational uses. Only the home use of either language coincides significantly with the type of school. Drobizheva, in her study of Tatars, attempted to correlate the type of school with attitudes towards aspects of ethnicity, including language. She found it characteristic that Tatars who have graduated from a mixed or Russian school have more favourable attitudes and enter into personal inter-ethnic contacts (involving language) more often than those attending Tatar medium schools.

Choice of school itself is an index (however partial and however

affected by official pressure) of attitude towards the language which characterises the school. The effect of the type of school is not to create attitudes but to reinforce those that helped to determine the original choice. Of such schools, we can identify first those where teaching is in the native tongue and those in which Russian is used. Where Russian is the teaching language in the first grade, it follows that it continues to be so to the end. The minority language school may shift to Russian medium instruction at any stage, and in the majority of cases this occurs when students enter secondary schools.

It does not always follow that verbal expression of a favourable attitude to Russian medium schools coincides with the actual choice of such a school by parents. For instance, Arutyuniyan found among village Tatars that, although 60 per cent of the parents favoured such a school, only 25 per cent of them chose it for their children. Furthermore, the attitude to Russian or native language school is associated with attitudes to other ethnic indices. A Terent'eva claims: 'There is a definite relationship between the relative number of schools with instruction in the language of the indigenous nationality and all other indices defining the direction of the ethnic process' (cf. Bruk). Such bilingual schools, therefore, are not forced upon administrators or parents simply because of the degree of local heterogeneity. They are preferred even when an alternative organisation is available, since they safeguard the native tongue (which is the teaching language for students who opt for it), as well as offer an opportunity to acquire Russian and to be taught in it if that is the choice. Attitudes to bilingual teaching are generally very favourable but not uniformly so. Of the different occupational groups in Latvia, the least favourable were physicians (66.2 per cent) and government workers (76.2 per cent) and the most favourable engineers and technicians (100 per cent) and teachers (91 per cent) (Kholmogorov, 1975).

## PLANNING THE LANGUAGES

### **Teacher Training Paradigm**

We have referred to the fact that most of the national schools are in the rural areas and suffer from the disinclination of teachers to work there. But the question is not simply a matter of a sufficient number of teachers but of teachers who know the language of the nationality, and

have been trained to teach it and to use it in teaching other subjects. This is exemplified in the case of Abkhaz. In 1945 it was decreed that elementary schools in which Abkhaz was used should be closed. In 1953 it was announced (*Zarya Vostoka*) that this decision had been reversed and that Abkhaz could be used in elementary schools, with either Russian or Georgian after the first four years. However, this reversal of policy had little effect because few teachers competent to teach and use the language could be recruited.

The Collegium of the USSR Ministry of Education examined the question of the training of teachers in national schools and found that only 70 per cent had higher education, and that the numbers enrolled were not sufficient to meet the demands (*Uchitel'skaya gazeta*, 31.7.73). In 1976 it was reported that 'nationalities divisions' had been set up in the Universities of Kuibyshev, Saratov, Minsk and in many others in the European and Asian parts of the country. The number of nationalities represented in these 'divisions', which are designed to train teachers for 'national schools', using the language of the particular nationality as a medium of instruction, has increased greatly to include students from the Transcaucasian and Baltic republics as well as from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kirgizia, Tadzhikistan and Turkmenia (*Uchitel'skaya gazeta*, 5.7.76).

The same is true of the nationalities of the Far North. It was reported in 1949 that 60 per cent of the teachers in those schools were recruited from outside the area, and special bonuses were paid to attract teachers. In the schools of the Evenki there were scarcely any more teachers who spoke the language as their mother tongue in 1977 than the twelve who were there in 1935. Because of this shortage of qualified teachers, the Institute of the Peoples of the North was established on the foundations of the Leningrad Institute of Geography. The Institute became incorporated into the Hertsen Institute, which has been the prototype for other institutes concerned with training teachers of national languages. By 1960 the Institute was able to recruit 100 tenth-grade students annually, five from each of the main northern ethnic groups, and they follow a three-year academic course and subsequently a three-year professional teacher's course, to which a fourth year is added to prepare them for the specific problems of bilingual education up to the eighth grade in the Far North. In 1967 the situation had shown a measure of improvement. One tenth of the teachers working in schools of the Chukhot National District were Chikchi or Eskimo, Evenks or some other northern nationality. In the Nenets National District, Nenets and Komi teachers comprised a

quarter of the staffs of the schools, and of these up to 80 per cent had higher or secondary specialised education.

In addition to being able to continue their education at the Hertsen Pedagogical Institute in Leningrad or at Krasnoyarsk, Magadan or Khabarovsk, the students may be trained as teachers in Nar'ian-Mar, Salekhard Igarka or Anadyr. There is similar provision for intending teachers of other national languages at the Tashkent Institute, the Tbilisi Institute and the Pedagogical Institute in Erevan, which, like the Institute at Tbilisi, has separate sections for the basic language of the republic and for Russian.

### **The Linguistic Paradigm: Socio-Linguistic Background**

We have excluded the teaching of foreign languages as an integral element of bilingual education in the USSR, though it is not always clear how a 'second language' can be distinguished, at one end of the scale, from the mother tongue or native language and, at the other, from a foreign language. Not all languages acquired in addition to the mother tongue constitute a uniform set. Learning a second language in a 'mass' bilingual situation, e.g. Armenian as a second language in Tbilisi or Moscow, is different from the acquisition of the same language where there is little demographic support for it, e.g. Armenian in Washington or London; and learning Russian in Erevan is different from its acquisition in Paris or Bonn. Ordinarily, the clearest distinction between the second and a foreign language is based on the context of acquisition of either language. For instance, in Wales English is learned as a second language because of its prevalence throughout the country, whereas no matter what level of proficiency in Russian a Welsh child acquires, in Wales it is still a foreign language. The second language is acquired under pressure or with strong support from the social environment in which the language is freely used (Lewis, 1972).

It is recognised in the Soviet Union that, in spite of the considerable advances made in other aspects of linguistics, until recently the development of socio-linguistics has been slow, hampered by the fact that insufficient support has been forthcoming from the discipline of sociology. Consequently, any contribution sociologists could make to the understanding of the sociology of language has been limited.

The socio-linguistic approach to bilingualism has become more pronounced during the last decade, in the works of A. V. Avrorin, N. A. Baskakov, I. K. Beloded, Yu. D. Desheriev, S. K. Kenesbaev,

N. G. Kortelyanu, U. G. Kostomarov and M. Sh. Shiraliev, as well as those on the interface between linguistics and philosophy, such as A. G. Agaev, M. S. Dzhunusov, S. T. Kaltakhonyan, K. Kh. Khanazarov, A. I. Kholmogorov and I. P. Tsameryan. In fact, the range of socio-linguistic studies is comprehensive, including theoretical problems, the study of socially determined changes in Soviet languages, the study of the development and interaction of the languages of USSR, the interaction of standard Soviet languages and the dialects of those languages, as well as most of the aspects of language planning, including language policy. Soviet students maintain the clearest distinction between linguistic sociology, concerned with linguistic aspects of social phenomena, e.g. linguistic characteristics of small groups, and socio-linguistics, concerned with research into those language changes that are determined by social factors, as well as socially marked linguistic differences in the speech of different individuals.

Such researches have been conducted in many centres, including the Institute of Linguistics of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, the Russian Language Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, the Institute of Eastern Studies of the Academy, the Pushkin Institute of the Russian Language, the Saratov University, the Novosibirsk Institute of the Siberian Division of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, etc. Since 1972, the number of sub-divisions of the Soviet Sociological Association has been increased from five to fifteen. As a result of the cooperation of scholars belonging to these various institutes, the proceedings of many conferences concerned with bilingualism and bilingual education have been published, including *Vzaimodeistie* (1969), *Voprosy* (1964), *Voprosy* (1969). *Norma* (1969), *Osnovnye problemy* (1966), *Problemy* (1970), *Problemy* (1972), *Razvitie literaturnykh yazykov* (1965), *Sotsiolingvicheskie problemy* (1971), *Yazyk i obshchestvo* (1968) and several others.

### **Development of Literacy**

It cannot be repeated too often that one of the most important purposes of bilingual education as an aspect of socio-linguistic studies in the Soviet Union is increased and improved literacy, mainly in Russian but not necessarily limited to that language. Wherever different languages are in contact, some degree of bilingualism is inevitable, especially along the language frontiers. Prior to the fairly advanced level of modernisation, requiring more than an elitist,

minimal literacy, such bilingualism was oral and fortuitous – it was generally restricted to the uneducated speakers of the areas of contact. It was also fortuitous in the sense that it was unplanned and derived mainly from the normal contact of friends, acquaintances and others across the borders. Such oral and fortuitous bilingualism characterises most non-Russian-related bilingualism.

This does not imply that Russian, in areas where extensive Russian populations embraced a variety of minority groups, was not also an element in oral and fortuitous bilingualism. But by the present time nearly 99 per cent of the populations of the Soviet Union are literate in at least one language and, to a great extent, in two or more. The lowest level of literacy, in Tadzhikistan and Turkmenistan is 96.5 and 94.5 per cent respectively. In less than 80 years some of the nationalities have advanced to their present level from a base of 2.3 per cent literacy in Tadzhikistan, 3.1 per cent in Kirgizstan, 3.6 per cent in Uzbekistan, and under 10 per cent in Kazakhstan, Azerbaydzhan, Armenia and Turkmenistan.

This level of literate bilingualism (in Russian and non-Russian languages) is distinct from the limited literate bilingualism among elitist groups of the Tsarist regime, although efforts had been made by pioneers like Ilminsky to develop such mass literacy before the Revolution. The present position, however, could not have been achieved without considerable, deliberate, conscious and scholarly intervention in the corpus of the languages; for the possibility of universal, as opposed to elitist, literacy depends on the development of ‘national’ as distinct from what is termed ‘folk’ languages. The fundamental characteristic of a developed national language, compared with the folk language, is that it is ‘a single standardised literary language, (a common literary norm), which is shared by the entire nation and which functions in all aspects of communication and which is formed from a folk base’ (Desheriev, 1959). Such a development, it is claimed by Soviet linguists, cannot be a matter of chance but is the result of careful linguistic planning of the structure of the language in all its aspects, its lexis and, if necessary, its alphabetisation.

## Code Selection

Paul Garvin postulates two requirements for a standard language, namely, flexible stability of the code and intellectualisation. According to him, the codification needs to be flexible enough to allow

for modification in line with culture change, and it should allow the possibility of developing increasing variety along an ascending scale of functional dialects from conversation to scientific. In Shevelov's words, standard languages need to be 'omni-functional' in order to fulfil all the demands made upon a contemporary language in a modernised society. It is questionable whether any but the most developed languages, such as Georgian or Armenian (we exclude Russian and Ukrainian), have been able to maintain their original, flexible stability on an ascending scale of dialect and style variation. Nevertheless, a large number of hitherto 'unstandardised languages' have been enabled to become fully fledged literary languages, thus perhaps compensating somewhat for the functional limitations the planners have imposed upon previously standard languages.

The first criterion stressed by the Soviet linguists in normalising Soviet languages is adherence to a continuous historical tradition of speaking the dialect that has been selected as a single principal basis of standardisation. For example, the choice of the Tashkent-Ferghana dialect as the basis for standardised Uzbek was determined partly by the fact 'that it can be traced back to the linguistic community of Karkhanid period and which genetically speaking is related to the Uyghur language. Together they form a single unbroken line of development' (Medlin). But the historically authentic dialect may not be the most pure. In the case of Uzbek, this is the South Kazakhstan dialect, which, because of its possession of full vowel harmony, was the ultimately agreed choice as a basis for the Uzbek language. Next to purity and historic authenticity, the third criterion in codification is that the chosen dialect should be the most widely representative, not only geographically but also in its affinity with other dialects. The Kuvakan dialect of Bashkir was rejected as a base because it was found unrepresentative of other dialects. Literary Kal'myk is a similar synthesis, but the most important criterion of all those used in code selection, according to Soviet linguists, is the degree to which a selected dialect represents the spoken language.

## **Terminology**

The current processes of relexification of the national languages were initiated during the early Soviet period and can be understood only in the context of those early developments. Terminology loomed large in the considerations of language planners, and was given great prominence by the pioneer Soviet linguist N. Y. Marr 'as the linguistic

aspect of the future'. Changes in terminology were introduced partly in order to enrich the languages with the lexical items required by the economic and cultural revolution, partly in order to satisfy the politically motivated desire to eliminate from the Soviet languages vestigial lexical items that linked them to pre-revolutionary and genetically related languages, such as Arabic and Persian. A third cause for the insistence on encouraging such changes was the wish to ensure that the national languages were able to cope with translations of Marxist–Leninist and Stalinist literature. Vinogradov pointed out that similarities and correspondences between the different languages of the USSR that are attributable to the influence of Russian are manifested in the following processes:

- 1 An extension of the sphere of influence of Russian expressions and especially the new Soviet expressions and their loan translations.
- 2 A rapid dissemination of Sovietisms and their movement from one language to another.
- 3 The acquisition through Russian of a basic international vocabulary.

Lexification was raised very early, at the Congress of Workers in Education in 1924. Following the congress of Turkology at Baku in 1926, a special commission was set up to initiate work on dictionaries and lexicons for new political and scientific developments. By 1933 this Commission had produced several minimum lists for science and technology.

Apart from Soviet-wide commissions on terminology, many Union republics created their own commissions. In Armenia the Special Terminology Commission had, by 1950, approved over 18 000 medical terms and 13 000 legal terms. In Latvia 40 000 terms were approved during 1947–9. A permanent Terminology Commission of the Soviet Ministry of the Bashkir ASSR was created in the 1940s and its efforts were subsequently continued by the Bashkir Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (Mordvinov). It produced the first normative dictionary, which included sociological and philosophical terms, as well as lexicons for botany, chemistry, mathematics, physics, linguistics and medicine. A second series concerned with some additional subjects, including forestry, was published later. Similar work was conducted in other languages: for example, by The Terminology Commission of the Kirgiz Academy of Sciences, which has been systematising the lexicon of nearly all branches of sciences and has produced nearly seventy lexicons.

Such advances in lexicology have been governed by clearly defined theoretical principles, the first of which is that the maximum possible use be made of native resources. But though clearly formulated, the principle was abandoned in the thirties. Instead, the main sources for developing vocabularies were to be Russian.

Rather than using the spoken indigenous language as a source, Russian was used as the means of enriching the languages, but in this respect the practice was ambivalent. All sorts of propaganda were used to encourage the use of Russian sources. It was argued that anglicisms, or, more precisely, americanisms, entered Soviet scientific and technical terminology and nomenclature not by hundreds or thousands but by hundreds of thousands of words. Consequently, it was necessary to emphasise the use of Russian sources, although that language was as foreign as English to many inhabitants of the Soviet Union.

The Russian influence is more pervasive than the direct contribution suggests, since the Russian language has become the accepted model of lexical innovation. First, Russian is the intermediary for most words introduced from non-Soviet sources like English or German. Second, loan translation mainly from Russian sources has increased considerably. For instance, in Bashkir we have now, on the Russian model, *kultura-ayarti ese* (culturally instructive work), *kultura-politik-ayarti* (cultural-political education), etc. Another form of Russian influence over the natural processes of development of native languages is to have exclusive Russian and national language dictionaries. For instance, of the important Ukrainian dictionaries published recently, all are either Russian-Ukrainian or Ukrainian-Russian. In principle no publications of full dictionaries from Ukrainian to other languages or vice versa are issued. Occasionally one finds some slim dictionaries designed for high school pupils with the minimum basic vocabulary in German, French and slightly more bulky in English. On the other hand, a new trilingual Gagauz-Russian-Moldavian dictionary, serving the 160 000 Gagauz of S. Moldavia and incorporating 11 000 Gagauz terms, has been published by the Academy of Sciences.

## **Stylistic Changes**

Changes in the corpus of the national languages have meant changes in their stylistic characteristics. These stylistic characteristics are

indissolubly related to the structural characteristics of the languages and their lexical content. Consequently, the national languages increasingly approximate the Russian language in stylistic character. In fact, every effort is made to ensure that the educational and publishing practices of the republics implement Russian models. Every Ukrainian publication, for instance, has a style editor whose function it is to see that all the official prescriptions are applied. The results are unfavourable to variety in the national language. For example, *Literaturnaya Gazeta* reported in 1958: 'It is the activity of the style editors to require the implementation of what they find in the two official models – the Russian–Ukrainian Dictionary and the Ukrainian spelling system, and this results in excessive standardization, excessive stereotyping of the literary language and the suppression of any personal peculiarities in the author's language'.

Furthermore, because of increasing social and cultural convergence, the stylistic differentiations within each of the many national languages, brought about by the need to adapt to new roles, tend to follow a uniform pattern across languages because of the omnipresence of the Russian influence. 'Common trends and laws of development and mutual enrichment of languages (which) are clearly manifested in the formation of a special style of socio-political and publicistic literature of the Soviet epoch, took shape under the influence of the Russian language' (Desheriev, 1968). These developments are governed by the 'principle of minimum discrepancy' between national languages and between them and Russian (*printsip minimal'nykh raskhozhdeniy*) (Desheriev, 1968).

## Alphabetic Reform

The Soviet Union is not simply a multi-lingual but also a multi-graphical or multi-alphabetic country, and was even more so when the present regime came to power. The motives for alphabetic reform were several. First it was claimed that Arabic was unsuited to some of the Central Asian nationalities, but in these cases a stronger motive was the intention to separate them from the related languages spoken outside the USSR. Second, there was the strong desire to diminish the degree of heterogeneity that existed in the USSR. Third, even if radical changes in the alphabets had not been contemplated for political reasons, there was the conviction that the alphabets of several languages, such as Armenian, needed reform in any case. With the

inauguration of Soviet power, the demand for reform became widespread, and it was agreed that such reforms should follow certain prescribed principles.

In 1919 a special section of the Department of National Minorities of the USSR Commissariat of Education was created to develop textbooks and literature, and this led to serious consideration of alphabetic reform. By 1922, the Latin script was receiving approval, exemplified by the Report of the Second Conference of Uzbek Education Workers, who strongly opposed the use of Cyrillic. Between 1922 and 1926, the latinised script had been accepted with some reservations all over Central Asia. The new Latin alphabet was named the Unified New Turkic Alphabet (*Novyi Tyurkskiy Alfavit* – NTA). A permanent organisation – the All Union Central Committee on the New Turkic Alphabet – was formed to undertake linguistic research in promoting the new alphabet. However, the promoters of this alphabet were already in difficulties, because the Russian Cyrillic script was preferred by some nationalities and by 1937 there were clear indications of a radical switch of policy. In 1939 Dagestan adopted Cyrillic and by 1940 it had spread to most republics, more than sixty-eight languages having been supplied with scripts and over 25 million people able to use them.

## CONCLUSION

The tensions between affiliations to the various languages are increased but such tensions do not lead to open conflict; nor do they need to do so, provided the system of education is geared to meeting the problems that undoubtedly arise. One of the Soviet experts, Smirnov, refers to different kinds of ‘non-antagonistic contradictions’. One of these is that between innovation and conservatism, which has particular relevance to the nature of the relations between the traditional native and the intrusive Russian language. Another expression sometimes used in this connection is that the Soviet Union is pursuing ‘two paths’ (*dva potoka*) – the path leading to convergence of languages and ethnic groups, possibly to their merging (*zblizhenie* and *sliyanie*), and that leading to the maintenance of national languages and their cultures. Filin, the chief editor of *Voprosy Yazykoznaniya* and Director of the Institute of Linguistics of the Academy of Sciences, wrote: ‘We face the task of enormous importance: each Soviet citizen of non-Russian extraction, while

having command of his mother tongue and contributing to its blossoming and spread, must also freely master the language of international communication – the Russian language . . . Harmonious bilingualism and multi-lingualism free from even a shade of antagonism, that is our programme'. It is noteworthy that nothing is said of those of Russian extraction who might also become bilingual or multi-lingual. 'Non-antagonistic contradiction' is of particular interest in the Soviet Union, because the balance between the contradictory elements is manipulated deliberately, consciously and according to a preconceived political philosophy that envisages the dominance of Russian.

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# 6 Bilingual and Intercultural Education in Soviet Schools

WOLFGANG MITTER

## INTRODUCTION: THEMATIC FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The theme of this paper is based upon three extra-educational considerations which are not discussed further in this chapter. These considerations constitute the following historical and socio-political components.

First, the existence of the Soviet Union as a multilingual and multicultural entity is 'taken for granted' (Comrie, p. xi). Second, the Russian language fulfils the potential function of a lingua franca that is both officially promoted and, to a great extent, actually accepted by the people. This fact has to be regarded as an outcome of a long development, which, though deriving 'almost entirely from the centralising character of the Soviet Union' (Lewis, p. 55), is rooted in the territorial expansion that began in the sixteenth century. Third, Soviet-Communist ideology is centred around the creation of an 'over-arching structure, the "Soviet culture", which takes precedence over national cultures' (Lewis, p. 392).

Concerning the disciplinary dimension, this paper is conceived as an inquiry in the area of educational research, which, however, is in itself characterised by a multidisciplinary structure. This is evident from the reference educational science makes to the theory and experience of neighbouring disciplines, such as sociology, ethnology, political science, psychology and, in this case to a particularly high degree, linguistics. Beyond this more or less intra-educational dimension of the multidisciplinary nature of educational research, the theme of

bilingual and intercultural education must be related to the broad and complex area of bilingualism and multiculturalism, as has been demonstrated in an exemplary way by Nigel Grant's and E. Glyn Lewis's researches.

The methodological approach underlying this paper is based on the evaluation of information and analyses directly taken from accessible Soviet sources or derived from inquiries made by Western educationists. Apart from Grant's and Lewis's studies, I have particularly drawn on Isabelle Kreindler's and Oskar Anweiler's recent comments on the 'Russification' issue, to which I will return later. Concerning the empirical base of my paper, I have given preference to the reconstruction of case reports instead of evaluating census returns, which Grant's and Lewis's studies abound in.

### **Conceptual Considerations**

This introduction, however, should be completed by some considerations concerning the central concepts to be dealt with. The concept of 'bilingual education' needs explaining only in so far as it has to be defined against 'mono-lingual' and 'multi-lingual' education, wherein the most widespread form of mono-lingual education is related to the learner's native language; in the Soviet Union it is predominantly represented by the Russians, who do not learn any 'second mother-tongue'. Multi-lingual education, on the other hand, is likely to exist in the Soviet Union, too, mainly in 'trilingual' forms, in cases such as those in the non-Russian republics, where minorities acquire both the titular language and Russian. The sources I have evaluated do not give any evidence of this latter phenomenon. This may be explained by linguodidactic complexities, characterising multi-lingual education.

The concept of 'intercultural education' as applied to Soviet education seems to cause greater problems. Unlike 'bilingual education', it is not associated with Soviet educational terminology. Instead, Soviet educationists and policy-makers use the concept of 'international' education in two senses. While the first relates to the multi-national composition of learners and teachers (cf. Arsenov, p. 10), the second defines a central aspect of political education, complementary to 'patriotic education' (cf. I. P. Prokof'ev, p. 11). This connotation sometimes indicates educational efforts within the

community of socialist countries. However, as a rule it points to the intra-Soviet relationships, i.e. between the individual nations and nationalities of the USSR.

Though paying respect to the efforts of Soviet and foreign scholars to (re-) define the concepts of 'nation' (as the comprehensive category including ethno-lingual and socio-political parameters) and 'nationality' (as the lower category focused on ethnic features and language) (cf. Scharf, p. A 312), I am going to employ the terminology which has become commonplace in comparative sociological and educational literature and which uses 'culture' as the prime category in terms of which social groups can be defined in opposition to one another. 'Culture', in this wide definition, comprises origin, language, religion, education and national consciousness, wherein these features can be existent and manifest in sum or in part. This decision allows me to speak of the Soviet Union as a 'multi-cultural', instead of a 'multi-national', country.

The question whether to treat education as 'multi-cultural' or 'intercultural' remains. Without going into great detail to justify my choice, I want to opt for the concept of 'intercultural education', which better reflects the volitional and purposive character of the aspects of educational theory and practice to be discussed in this paper.

## INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION – THE OBJECTIVE BASE: MULTI-CULTURAL COMMUNITY

In the Soviet Union the objective base of intercultural education is given by the multi-cultural composition of the population as a whole. This general statement requires differentiation, however, owing to the great variety of individual situations, which can broadly be categorised in terms of the following three variants.

The first variant is marked by the existence of wide areas and large communities populated by members of one cultural entity only. Here 'intercultural' education must be more or less limited to theoretical instruction, at best enriched by meetings and holiday programmes outside the native environment. This variant comprises, above all, the purely Russian-populated areas.

As regards the widely abstract nature of intercultural education, the second variant offers a similar concrete framework. It is to be found mainly in the non-Russian republics, regions and areas where,

particularly in small communities, the contacts with Russians and members of other ethnic groups are often restricted to impersonal meetings at the administrative or commercial level. Unless this picture were true, bilingualism would have proceeded much farther than it actually has (cf. Comrie, p. 28).

The manifestation of both variants in the reality of Soviet society is one side of the coin. The other side indicates the migration process within the Soviet Union, which Lenin already had in mind when commenting on the impact of industrialisation and modernisation on the composition of the population both in the Tsarist and the post-revolutionary periods (cf. Anweiler, p. 42). A great number of topical Soviet publications present a stocktaking of this migration process and supply information about the growing multi-cultural composition of individual schools and classes that underlines the educational aspect of this trend. In the comparative view of multi-cultural education, such findings are worth noting the more they present patterns that are basically similar to those in Western Europe, paralleling problems posed by immigrants or guest-workers.

The impact of the intra-Soviet migration process on individual educational situations is illustrated by two cases. The head teacher of a boarding school (grades one to ten) in the Jewish Autonomous Region mentions that the pupils' population (330) is composed of thirteen nationalities, namely, Russians, Jews, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Lithuanians, Ossetians, Tatars, Mordvins, Chuvashs, Koreans, Azerbaydzhanis, Uzbeks and Germans (Prishkol'nik). The School No. 8 at Derbent (Dagestan ASSR) had (in the school year 1972–3) 1475 pupils from nineteen nationalities; among them were 880 Mountain-Jews, 205 Azerbaydzhanis, 174 Russians, 98 Lezgians and 55 Armenians (Garunov, 1975). The representativeness of this case would be, of course, much more convincing if the multi-cultural composition of such new industrial centres as Tol'yatti (Togliatti) and Novocheboksary (Chuvash ASSR) could be found to characterise their schools (cf. Rashidov, I. P. Prokof'ev). The Russian-medium instruction of the schools I have just mentioned is worth remembering, bearing in mind the following parts of this paper.

Soviet educationists and policy-makers underline the optimum condition provided by the multi-cultural composition of the population, in particular in multi-cultural communities, for the realisation of intercultural education. The accessible Soviet documents do not, however, offer any evidence of conflicts among members of various cultural and ethnic groups, such as we would be

familiar with in comparable situations in the educational systems of Western countries.

### **Curricular Aims of Intercultural Education**

The investigation of the Soviet sources dealing with intercultural education reveals a dichotomy, which can be clarified by elucidating it within the context of a discussion about bilingual education. This dichotomy is generated by the question of what 'Soviet culture' is. Is it conceived as an amalgamation of various national cultures or is it oriented towards the traditions and values of the Russian culture as a historically and functionally determined superior entity? This is not yet the appropriate point at which to indulge in the complexity of this dichotomy. From an informative standpoint, suffice it to point out that the 'Russian' orientation becomes most evident in the universal relevance accorded to the learning of Russian literature in non-Russian schools.

N. M. Shanskiy and M. V. Cherkezova offer a good example of this issue, in that they propose the thesis that the practice of Russian literature instruction often suffers from an unsatisfactory consideration of the pupils' mental and cultural environment. In this context, the authors speak of the 'Marxist-Leninist philosophy of the dialectics of the general, particular and individual principles. This trinity permits a scientific explanation of the particularities inherent in the teaching of Russian literature to a non-Russian audience' (Shanskiy/Cherkezova, p. 72). While the general and individual principles are usually taken into consideration, the national principle is, they argue, often neglected. The authors explicate this principle by using the concepts of 'the imaginative system' and 'the aesthetic tradition' (Shanskiy/Cherkezova, p. 73).

Special attention is paid to the problem of using illustrations in introducing non-Russian children to the spirit of Russian literature. This approach must be treated very delicately in order to avoid the danger of the children associating the illustrative materials with the comprehension of their mother tongue. This consideration leads to the argument that the teaching of Russian literature must be considered in connection with the particularities both of Russian and non-Russian literature. Proceeding to the implications of language instruction, the authors conclude by emphasising the linkage between literature instruction and linguistic studies, with special regard to the

meaning of words and their contextual position in the given text. This conclusion drawn from the investigation underlines the complexity of the approach, which differentiates it from the teaching of Russian literature to native speakers and makes it an issue that requires understanding within the framework of intercultural education.

Another striking example of the linkage between bilingual and intercultural education is presented by reports of the impact of Russian-medium instruction to non-Russian children on the coherence of national customs. This example is drawn from the school conditions in Northern Siberia, where helicopters are used for transporting children between boarding school and home. Although they assert the compatibility of this kind of schooling with the preservation of the cultural traditions of the individual ethnic groups concerned, V. G. Arsenov and N. Petrachuk point to unsolved problems caused by the children's alienation from their environment. In this respect, the 'moral-psychological peculiarities of the children' (Arsenov, p. 11) and the vocational training for traditional crafts (Petrachuk) are discussed. N. Petrachuk fears that these crafts, such as fishing, deer-breeding and hunting, may die off, the more so as the youngsters continue their education at 'modern' technical schools and institutes after having left the general secondary school. Appreciative remarks are made about the efforts of certain schools to link professional orientation during the school year with the children's activities at home during the holidays (Arsenov).

This example, taken as a whole, circumscribes the collision of two cultural patterns in the educational process of non-Russian children. Intercultural education may be a means to overcome the tensions resulting from such a collision, whereas the negative alternative points to a parallelism in everyday lives. The 'dichotomy between home and work' (Lewis, p. 305), centring around this issue, can be further clarified within the context of bilingual education, a context the following considerations are designed to expound.

## BILINGUAL EDUCATION

In the context of intercultural education, the phenomenon of bilingualism plays a crucial role, which can simply be traced back to the important role language plays in people's reasoning and acting. From this fundamental point of view, census returns and case studies on shifts in language affiliations within ethnic groups, such as Germans

and Jews on the one hand and small Northern nationalities on the other, deserve intense scrutiny (cf. Lewis, pp. 76 *et seq.*).

This information indicates the micro-dimension of the relation between language and culture, in that it suggests the apparent possibility of retaining one's inherited cultural identity even after abandoning one's inherent language. Nigel Grant's question, as to whether 'genuine pluralism can stop at the language of instruction' (Grant 1981, p. 68), convincingly mirrors this approach on the micro-level, since it reveals the socio-cultural (and political) dimension implicit in 'purely' language teaching.

### **Aims of Bilingual Education**

The definition of aims to be attributed to bilingual education in the Soviet Union is widely dependent on 'national-Russian' bilingualism being the focus of language planning. The acquisition of Russian by non-Russian Soviet citizens is, therefore, the main aim of bilingual education, upon which the following considerations will concentrate.

We do not want, however, to focus upon the main aim of bilingual education at the expense of ignoring other forms of bilingual education referred to in Soviet sources. Firstly, mention is made of examples of mutual bilingualism, e.g. in Azerbaydzhan (Dzhafarov; cf. Chekhoeva, 1982). The second 'minor' form of bilingualism is represented by 'bilingualism between languages of the USSR, other than between local languages and Russian' (Comrie, p. 32; cf. Lewis, p. 80, Desheriev/Protchenko). This seems to be, above all, a case where minorities learn the titular languages of their (non-Russian) republic or region. According to information given by E. G. Garunov, there were 2 568 100 pupils attending Uzbek-medium school classes in 1970, while the corresponding Uzbek age groups only amounted to 2 547 500. Taking it for granted that many Uzbek children attended Russian-medium schools, the proportion of non-Uzbeks in Uzbek-medium schools must have been even larger than 20 000 (Garunov, 1980).

Concerning the 'national-Russian' type of bilingualism, the aim of bilingual education seems to be easily defined as the acquisition of 'free command' of Russian by all non-Russian youngsters. Such a general formulation requires, of course, to be specified. This has been done by E. G. Garunov, who makes distinctions between the following:

- (a) The transition from monolingual to bilingual education as a lower stage.
- (b) The medium stage of conditional, incomplete bilingualism.
- (c) The terminal stage of complete bilingualism.

This scheme accentuates the quantitative aspect, to be measured by the degree of achievement in passive and active language competence with its special components (pronunciation, reading comprehension, understanding, speaking, reasoning and writing). In contrast to this specification, the 'dichotomy between home and work', introduced into this discussion already, points to a language competence characterised by two levels of utilisation, wherein local languages are pushed back into the private and intimate areas (Simon, p. 38; cf. Lewis, p. 74). Lewis gives convincing examples of this dichotomy by evaluating studies of the Tatars of Kazan and the Letts (Lewis, p. 305).

While Soviet educationists welcome this development, it is worthwhile quoting Gerhard Simon's view that it threatens the survival of non-Russian languages, since languages in which no university lectures can be held often die (Simon, p. 38).

The degree to which the splitting up of language application in everyday life is possible depends on:

- (a) The stage of development of the individual non-Russian languages, which makes them differently suitable for the needs of modern civilisation (cf. Grant 1982, p. 3; cf. Grant 1981, p. 61).
- (b) The materials individual non-Russian languages can dispose of in order to participate in the process of 'modernisation'.

We will have to ask how this dependence structure is reflected in linguodidactic conceptions and instructional methods. For the purpose of anticipating the social background of these problem areas and of reinforcing the discussion concerning the definition of the aim of bilingual education, it may be worth looking at Bernard Comrie's scheme for summing up the social functions of the various languages within the USSR (Comrie, pp. 27–9).

This is his six-scale scheme:

- 1 The first scale is marked by languages spoken by very small population groups. These have no written form, so that people cannot attain good competence in another language, usually Russian (examples: Aleut and Khinalug).

- 2 The second scale comprises the languages that have a written form but are not used as media of education. In some cases, one can state a transitional stage in the phasing out of a written language, which is, in Comrie's scheme, the case with Yiddish, Koryak and, to some extent, Kurdish, which has been reduced to a school subject with native speakers.
- 3 The languages belonging to the third scale are quite extensively used in publication (e.g. children's books, basic literature, newspapers, short-stories, etc.) and also used as the medium of instruction in the primary grades of school, after which instruction shifts to another language, usually Russian. The native language, however, may still be taught as a school subject in the upper grades (example: Chukchi).
- 4 The languages to be arranged at the fourth scale are widely used in publication and also used as media of education throughout the school system, though often neither in further nor higher education. This group comprises most of the languages of the ASSR's, such as Abkhas, Tatar, and Komi.
- 5 The fifth scale is composed of languages which, in addition to having the above function, are used as educational media in universities (often alongside Russian) and as co-government languages with Russian in the internal administration of the corresponding administrative area. In this context one has, above all, to think of the fourteen Union Republics other than the RSFSR.
- 6 Finally, the last scale is occupied by Russian, which has the additional function of being the lingua franca within the USSR and of being used in relations with foreign countries as well.

In total, Comrie's scheme underlines the diversified structure of the Soviet Union as far as languages and ethnic entities are concerned, and at the same time provides a structure that is to be found reflected in the educational system.

### **Legal Provisions and Organisational Forms**

An inquiry into the history of bilingual education lies beyond the scope of considerations here, although I should think it necessary for any thorough and systematic analysis of this theme. In this context I want to refer again to Isabelle Kreindler's and Oskar Anweiler's comments. The following remarks are, therefore, confined to the legal documents that fix the framework of the current policy in this area.

First, mention has to be made of the Statute of the General Education Secondary School of 8 September 1970, which contains this regulation: 'For schools with instruction in a non-Russian language, an 11-year school duration can be fixed by permission of the Council of Ministers of the USSR' (cit. from Schiff, p. 532). This regulation is practised in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. In the non-Russian ten-year schools of the USSR the weekly timetable contains two or three additional periods compared to the norm. The timetables for Georgia, Azerbaydzhan and the RSFSR show that time spent on Russian language instruction in national schools cannot be covered by the additional periods mentioned, but entails reductions in the teaching of other subjects, mostly foreign languages.

The second document I have to mention is the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR of 13 October 1978, 'On Measures for the Further Accomplishment of the Study and Instruction of the Russian Language in the Union Republics' (cit. from Schiff, pp. 535 *et seq.*).

Finally, 'semi-official' evidence is provided by the publications about the All-Union Scientific-Theoretical Conference on Teaching Russian to non-Russians, which was held at Tashkent in May 1979 (cf. Brezhnev; M. A. Prokof'ev, 1979b; Rashidov; Volodin) and by relevant remarks contained in publications by the Soviet Minister of Education (cf. M. A. Prokof'ev 1978, 1979a), which emphasise current trends, problems and strategies in the conveyance of Russian to non-Russian youngsters.

Concerning the organisation structure of 'national-Russian' bilingual education, one has to consider, above all, the inter-relationship between the first language used as the medium of instruction and the second language as the taught language. This kind of interrelationship must be seen within the internal Soviet language spectrum. Therefore, the teaching of 'foreign' languages, which is not discussed here, remains outside this spectrum, although the foreign language can be taught as the 'second' language from a numerical point of view, namely, in Russian-medium schools within a purely Russian environment. With regard to the media of instruction, the Soviet educational system generally can be divided into 'national schools' with a medium of instruction other than Russian, Russian-medium schools and special types, referred to below:

- 1 'National schools' were attended in the whole of the Soviet Union by about 33 per cent of the respective age groups in 1979, while the percentage amounted to more than 80 in the republics of

Uzbekistan, Georgia, Azerbaydzhan, Lithuania, Tadzhikistan, Armenia and Turkmenistan (Prokof'ev, 1979b). This is the type of school the legal provisions mentioned above have been made for. There is a remarkable diversity within this system with regard to the start of Russian as a school subject and the number of weekly periods devoted to it.

From the first half year of grade one, Russian is taught in the autonomous republics of the RSFSR and the Union republics of Uzbekistan, Georgia and Armenia; and from the second half of grade one or the beginning of grade two, in the other Union republics (e.g. Ukraine, Lithuania). However, it is intended that the teaching of Russian is to commence with the beginning of primary education everywhere. In order to advance the starting point, pre-school education has been included in the curriculum. For this special purpose, preparatory classes have been opened and rapidly developed during the past decade. I. V. Barannikov calls them the 'most perspective type of national schools' (Barannikov, p. 60). M. A. Prokof'ev holds the view that the early acquisition of a second language is reasonable, mentioning Georgia as an exemplary case, with 10 500 children learning Russian from their fourth year of age (Prokof'ev 1979b).

The total amount of weekly periods in grades one to ten (or eleven) varies from thirty-three in Latvia, Estonia and Moldavia to forty in Kirgizia, so that the specification with regard to the different levels must be taken into account. These are the numbers of weekly periods in primary education: Baltic republics seven to eight, Georgia fourteen, Tadzhikistan twelve, RSFSR twenty-six. Comparatively few periods are provided at the upper level in Central Asia, Transcaucasia and Moldavia (Shamstudinova, p. 36).

- 2 The Russian-medium schools for non-Russian children have attracted widest attention both in official statements and in the didactic literature, to be regarded later. This organisational form can be divided into three types, namely, for non-Russian ethnic groups within the RSFSR (Chuvash, Bashkir, etc.), for immigrants from other Union republics (e.g. Armenians) within the RSFSR, and, finally, for Russians in other Union republics 'which non-Russians also tend to select for their children' (Lewis, p. 356).

There are considerable differences in provision of Russian-medium schools for non-Russians, ranging between opportunities provided for 75 to 90 per cent of pupils (e.g. Bashkir) and small percentages (lowest in the Baltic republics). Though 'national'

schools are required to raise attainments in Russian, too, it is the Russian-medium schools that apparently are subject to higher expectations. These become manifest in the role attributed to the Russian language as a 'second mother tongue' (e.g. I. P. Prokof'ev).

Attention should be paid to the organisational framework created for the fulfilment of this expectation. Preparatory classes come on the scene again. The task to be solved consists in the parallel acquisition of the children's mother tongue and Russian (Arsenov, p. 10), and the optimum introduction of Russian-medium instruction into all school subjects is differently organised. S. A. Chekhoeva exemplifies this issue by the following information on the instruction of Russian:

Preparatory class/grade two: Tadzhikistan, Udmurt ASSR, Mari ASSR, Mountain-Altay Autonomous Region and Khakas Autonomous Region.

Grades two or three: Chuvash ASSR, Mordva ASSR and Komi ASSR;

Grade four (and higher): Yakut ASSR, Tuva ASSR, Bashkir ASSR and Tatar ASSR (Chekhoeva, 1982).

- 3 As an innovative way of improving Russian-medium instruction, schools with an extended Russian language instruction have been opened during the past decade. They seem to be boarding schools and to work in an experimental fashion. According to the Soviet sources I have evaluated, such schools exist in Azerbaydzhan, Latvia, Kirgizia and Uzbekistan. Special mention is made of the Republican Boarding School at Tashkent and the Republican Specialised Boarding School named after A. S. Makarenko at Baku (Volodin). A. Useynov has recently criticised the inconsistency implicit in the policy of developing this type of school, reporting on changes that have been made during the past ten years without being underpinned by any scientifically based methodological considerations. Why, the author asks with respect to the development in Azerbaydzhan, has there been a transition from grade seven to nine as the starting year of the extended course? (Useynov 1982).
- 4 Besides preparatory classes and schools with extended Russian instruction, the innovative programme also includes schools characterised by a parallel instruction in Russian and a local language (cf. Shamstudinova, p. 37). To give an example, there are

153 such schools with about 200 000 pupils in Kirgizia. Unfortunately I have not yet been able to determine the quality of these schools with regard to their 'bilingual' character. The term 'parallel instruction' only seems to point to the parallel existence of classes with different media of instruction but not to some kind of bilingual education with fully equivalent languages.

- 5 Finally, the list has to be completed by the inclusion, firstly, of optional Russian language courses aiming at the intensification and improvement of language competence, and, secondly, of extramural activities offered by youth centres and other non-formal training establishments.

### **Linguodidactic Issues**

It is not my intention to indulge in special and technical questions regarding the teaching of Russian and other native languages in Soviet schools. The following considerations are, therefore, confined to determining the position of linguodidactics within the conceptualisation and implementation of bilingual education. The same limitation holds for the presentation of methodical issues, to be dealt with later.

N. M. Shanskiy, director of the Research Institute for Russian Language Instruction in National Schools at the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences, acknowledges the quality of linguodidactic investigations conducted before 1917. However, he continues, research and development was based upon entirely new conditions after the October Revolution. The present situation is, above all, marked by the introduction of standard syllabi, to be used in all kinds of Russian language instruction for non-Russians. In this context, there has been a controversy about the purpose of developing one standard for all nationalities. Opponents of this concept, represented by the Research Institute for the Teaching of Russian in National Schools, have objected that too little regard has been given to specific phenomena of individual languages. Shanskiy, supporting the one-model concept, replies by pointing to these characteristics:

- 1 The non-Russian languages have many features in common.
- 2 In cases of cognate languages, certain parts of the learning programme can be skipped.
- 3 In cases of specific differences and complications, teachers can use additional exercises and materials (Shanskiy/Uspenskiy).

Below this general level of considerations, the following individual problems seem to be worth articulating.

The first problem is raised by the different starting knowledge children have of the Russian language when they enter school. E. G. Garunov distinguishes three groups:

- (a) Children who have a perfect knowledge of Russian and are prepared to learn according to the syllabi and textbooks provided for Russian schools; this group also includes non-Russian children speaking Russian as their mother tongue and non-Russian children having acquired Russian alongside their mother tongue.
- (b) Non-Russian children who have a weak knowledge of Russian when entering school (mostly limited to colloquial language) and have to overcome serious difficulties.
- (c) Non-Russian children who have no knowledge at all or a weak knowledge of the Russian language; they are not prepared to learn in a Russian-medium school and, therefore, need special pre-school training if they are to attend such a school.

With special regard to Russian-medium schools, Garunov emphasises that each pre-school has to tackle this diversification in an individual way, considering the particular composition of its catchment area. Further complications are caused by differences in the extent and quality of pre-school training in Russian and, above all, by the linguistic environment in which the individual children live. In general, one has to make a distinction between children who have the opportunity to communicate in Russian and those who have not. A gap between these two groups increases rather than decreases during schooling. Besides, one has to take into account the difficulties caused by the migration of non-Russians to places where only Russian-medium schools are available. That means that children must be transferred from national to Russian-medium schools, which particularly affects children in upper grades.

It is not knowledge of the Russian language alone which must be taken into consideration but also the fact that weak knowledge produces deficiencies in other subjects and in the whole educational process. Therefore, the conveyance of the living Russian language is regarded as a central didactic objective. In this context, Garunov reveals the existence of children with weak competence in both the Russian language and their mother tongue, underlining the point that the acquisition of Russian must be seen as a gradual process, which

only succeeds when the non-Russian youngsters learn how to reason in Russian. He refers to an inquiry, conducted on the basis of a questionnaire in two *sovkhozy* concerning the competence of reasoning in Russian. Positive responses were given by 68 per cent of the eighth-graders, 91 per cent of the ninth-graders and 94 per cent of the tenth-graders (Garunov, 1975, p. 34).

The linguistic relation between Russian and the respective native language plays an important role, in that it affects the specific conditions under which children acquire the Russian language. Soviet linguistics have investigated this issue with special regard to the phenomenon of interlingual interference. Interference can arise on various levels, beginning with phonetic peculiarities and ending up with defects in vocabulary and grammar. The Georgian linguists and methodologists E. D. Batiashvili and T. S. Baliashvili, referring to their own inquiries in the Research Institute for National Schools (1975), have identified these three types of vocabulary interrelations:

- 1 Words that do not produce any vocabulary interference because their meaning is identical (*avtobus, lektsiya, literatura*).
- 2 Words producing interference in cases where one word in the one language corresponds to two (or more) words in the other (which is said to be the most interesting phenomenon).
- 3 Words with no equivalence because of local traditions (with regard to Russian: *bylina, valenki, samovar*).

The conclusions the Georgian researchers draw from their investigations resulted in the demand for semantic and etymological studies (Batiashvili/Baliashvili).

Interference is, of course, a fundamental problem in bilingual situations where the distance between Russian and the native language is great. It negatively influences the learning of the Russian language, because many pupils unconsciously transfer elements of their mother tongue into Russian (Sturov). Difficulties raised by interference are, however, to be observed in cognate bilingual conditions, too, as they exist between Russian on the one hand and Ukrainian and Belorussian on the other. Under such conditions the pupil quickly acquires the ability of oral and reading comprehension but underestimates the efforts required to cope with the attainment of speaking and writing (Suprun). While the Georgian linguists mentioned above plead for the elaboration of an 'anti-inferential dictionary' (Batiashvili/Baliashvili, p. 62), their Belorussian colleague A. E. Suprun recommends a

‘differential-systematic’ approach in the teaching of Russian. The two attributes are explained in this way:

- (a) Systematic acquisition of Russian with respect to phonetics, grammar and vocabulary.
- (b) Differentiated learning of elements that do not coincide in both languages (this step is regarded as predominantly important).
- (c) Training to facilitate the practical application of the Russian language by considering both the coinciding and the dissimilar elements of both languages (Suprun).

The third problem concerns the position of dialects in bilingual education. It is approached from two sides. N. M. Shanskiy indicates the way in which bilingual education has been facilitated by the gradual extinction of dialects within the Russian language and its ‘clear democratization’, as far as the literary language level is concerned (Shanskiy, 1978). The usage of dialects in non-Russian communities, however, seems to cause more serious problems, because teachers have to cope with making their children learn their mother tongue correctly and, at the same time, teach them Russian (Sturov). In this context, the establishment of preparatory classes is justified, with the additional argument that they largely serve the purpose of eliminating dialects.

The whole problem area, with its various kinds of interdependencies, is highlighted by considerations about assimilation processes, which are characterised, above all, by the permeation of non-Russian languages by Russian, particularly with regard to vocabularies. The relevant arguments have to be considered in their ideological perspectives, which should not, however, lead to neglecting the social and semiotic aspects inherent in this problem. N. M. Shanskiy has paid attention to the growth of a vocabulary and phraseology shared by all languages of the Soviet Union. In this context he points to ‘Russian Sovietisms’, which are particularly worthy of study since they signal ‘All-Union innovations in the national languages’ (Shanskiy, 1978, p. 54).

### **Methodological Issues and Learning Aids**

The discussion concerning the optimum methodological approach to the teaching of Russian is apparently focused on a controversy known

to methodologists all over the world. I am referring to the dichotomy between the direct approach, with an oral instruction period at the beginning, and the deductive-systematic approach, orientated to the requirements of grammar. The Soviet methodologists seem to follow a median line, in which the question of how abilities and skills are formed is predominant, instead of defining mechanistic teaching styles based on the conveyance of grammar and rules (cf. Shamstudinova). Criticising not only school practice but also textbook production and dogmatic positions in the academic discussion, A. Useinov has made this somewhat sarcastic comment: 'In one word, there are many questions posed today; without answering them, even an experienced Russian linguist will find it difficult to change instruction. As in an orchestra, there must be an overall harmony between the conductor and the musicians' (Useinov).

As far as the systematic approach is concerned special attention is paid to the usage of the comparative method generally and to the special stages of learning and learning situations. An interesting comment on this issue is offered by S. A. Tsorionov. His study is the outcome of an investigation into the differences between the acquisition of Russian in remedial and regular 'national schools' but his conclusions highlight the general criteria of language learning. His starting point is the question of how the structural and semantic incompatibilities of two languages can be comprehended by children. Examining the conventional assumption that all non-Russian children can be introduced into the Russian language by means of the comparative method, the author says that this method does not work with oligophrenic children. Referring to findings, he reports on the difficulties children in remedial classes have to overcome in their Russian language learning process. He contrasts the literal (*doslovnyi*) with the analogous (*smyslovnyi*) translation, the empirical base being the relations between Ossete and Russian (Tsorionov).

According to these findings, children in regular schools prefer analogous translation, while children in remedial schools remain on the literal level and, therefore, stay behind their age group. It is not only the preference in translation method as such that marks the different approaches to learning Russian but also the different techniques in reacting to difficulties, which explains the generalising value of Tsorionov's study. He records that children with a command over the second level try to apply analogous translations when they cannot continue the literal translation they have started with. The difference signals the specific development of the 'linguistic instinct'.

Children in regular schools reach the second level (including the ability to compare phenomena in two languages) in grade four, while children in remedial schools reach this level in grade six, if at all.

Two further issues need to be taken into special account. Firstly, all methodological considerations referring to the pre-school stage tend to be enriched by references to Soviet psychologists, such as V. V. Davydov and D. El'konin. I. V. Barannikov emphasises those psychological findings which show that children are able to learn the Russian language on a much higher level than had formerly been assumed. Six-year-old children can acquire a vocabulary of about 4,000 words. They have no shyness in speaking and do not mind frequently repeating the acquired knowledge. In the preparatory classes the acquisition of Russian is favoured by the absence of overload and flexibility of the timetables. At that level of learning, commencing with oral exercises is thought to be incontestable, but it seems that the introduction to the Russian language also takes place in the preparatory class (Barannikov).

Secondly, the division of classes exceeding a certain number (e.g. twenty pupils in Armenia, cf. Volodin) into sub-groups is accentuated. This sub-grouping is usually confined to the primary grades but sometimes also includes the whole of the general education secondary school (cf. K. D. Basilaya, in *'Itogi'*).

In the relevant articles one can discover explicit complaints about the unsatisfactory equipment of schools and the lack of suitable textbooks and dictionaries. A. Useinov points to collisions between (new) syllabi, which are appreciated in principle, and (old) textbooks, which have not kept pace with the new curricular demands. This deficiency, he says, makes teachers in grades six to ten compress the teaching of certain matters, which is questionable from a methodological and didactic point of view.

Contrary to such critical remarks, progress in the development of textbooks and learning aids is also described. In her article about Russian language textbooks for non-Russians, S. A. Chekhoeva refers to the Education Act for the RSFSR of 1974 as the foundation of the present state of Russian-medium and national schools. A few years before, in the 1960s (at first, in an experimental manner), special syllabi, textbooks and learning aids had been constructed for Russian-medium schools with Turkic, Ugro-Finnish and Abkhaz-Adyge populations. In particular, she points to the inclusion of folk-tales and songs in textbooks, which gives the teacher the opportunity to enrich instruction and, moreover, to promote moral and ideological

education (Chekhoeva, 1977, p. 66). Other authors report the establishment of subject laboratories (*uchebnye kabinety*) and language laboratories (e.g. Useinov). In Armenia a television course in Russian has been running since 1974 (Volodin).

## Teacher Education

It is not surprising that Soviet politicians and educationists devote particular attention to the teacher's role in bilingual education. The lack of competent teachers and the deficiencies in many teachers' command of the Russian language, which had been emphasised in Soviet publications at the beginning of the 1970s (cf. Mitter, 1972), has apparently stimulated remarkable efforts to improve the situation. In the statements presented at the All-Union Scientific – Theoretical Conference on Teaching Russian to non-Russians (Tashkent, May 1979), the speakers laid stress on the increase in the number of Russian language teachers with higher education qualifications who taught at 'national schools' and Russian-medium schools. According to M. A. Prokof'ev, teachers of Russian language and literature are trained in sixty universities and in 170 pedagogic institutes, out of which ninety-four specialise in the training of teachers for 'national schools' (Prokof'ev, 1979b). To give an example, in Uzbekistan the training of Russian language teachers takes place at three universities, fourteen pedagogic institutes and eighteen pedagogic secondary schools for primary teachers (Volodin).

The provision for non-Russian students to study Russian at universities and pedagogic institutes in the RSFSR, as well as in the Ukrainian and Belorussian Union Republics, stimulates improvements in teachers' qualifications. Certain quotas are set for the acceptance of such students independently of the regular competition procedures (M. A. Prokof'ev, 1979b; Rozov).

Reports on teacher education include information about activities in the area of in-service training (cf. Volodin). A special example is provided by V. G. Arsenov's article about the state of in-service training in the North. He mentions not only the establishment of Methodological Centres but also the difficulties resulting from the great distances between individual schools. The Department for the Northern Peoples at the Pedagogic Institute A. I. Hertsen permanently organises two-year courses dealing with the improvement of the qualifications of teachers in non-Russian primary

schools, the yearly quota comprising seventy-five participants. Similar courses are conducted at the Pedagogic Institutes of Magadan and Kamchatka and at regional In-Service Training Centres. The Research Institute for National Schools, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education of the RSFSR, participates in this programme. The training of Russian language teachers for schools in the Northern region seems to be particularly 'complicated' (Arsenov, p. 14) because these teachers are expected to have an insight into the local people's ways of life and to communicate with parents.

## **Research**

Research into bilingual education is conducted at universities as well as pedagogic institutes. The centres of relevant activities are, however, the Research Institute for Russian Language Instruction in National Schools at the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the USSR and the aforementioned Research Institute for National Schools under the auspices of the Ministry of Education of the RSFSR. While the academy institute, according to its title, is required to investigate the teaching of Russian to non-Russians, the ministerial institute is concerned with the development of non-Russian languages as instruction media; a special department deals with the development of (non-Russian) textbooks (Veselov).

## **Motivations and Attainments**

What are the motivations of non-Russian parents to enrol their children in Russian-medium schools? This question has been intensively discussed by Western educationalists with special reference to the socio-economic and socio-political position of the Russian language as the lingua franca. Isabelle Kreindler, though emphasising the thesis of 'Russification', does not deny that 'the Russian language is a key to economic and social mobility' and 'upward-bound parents naturally wish their children to possess this key' (Kreindler, p. 14). Continuing her thoughts, she shares Soviet and other Western authors' views that Russian is 'the language of science and technology, the channel to the latest advances of the modern world' (Kreindler, p. 15). This view forces her to admit that the promotion of Russian does '... not ... suggest that many parents do not indeed wish to have Russian

as their language of instruction' (Kreindler, p. 14). She even proposes the thesis that Russian '... under normal circumstances would be destined to be the lingua franca' (Kreindler, p. 27).

On this specific point, Isabelle Kreindler's argumentation does not even contradict the official Soviet version of the 'voluntary' character of learning Russian among non-Russians. In legal documents this principle is tied to the parents' right to choose the type of education they regard as most suitable for their children. In practice, however, it is only the Russians who have educational and cultural establishments and media in their mother tongue at their disposal everywhere, and thus only they are in a position to utilise their constitutional right (cf. Simon, p. 30).

The comments I have just mentioned indicate the significant interdependence between the motivation for learning Russian and the vertical and horizontal mobility of the Soviet population (cf. Lewis, p. 245). Below this interdependence there is, however, much room for acknowledging the diversity we have already taken for granted when recognising the multi-cultural character of the whole of Soviet society.

Factors disrupting the learning of Russian are, firstly, geographical handicaps, which, however, may result in stimulating effects, as noted by E. Glyn Lewis: 'The custom of living on isolated farms in the Soviet Union inhibits the spread of bilingualism; but more important than that, a rural upbringing creates the desire to become bilingual as a means of escape' (Lewis, p. 290). Lewis also puts his finger on the significant interdependence between the attitude to learning Russian and the output of language acquisition: 'It is significant that Georgia, which is usually the most reluctant of nations to conform to Russification and whose attitude to Russian is lukewarm, is constantly being criticised for the quality of its Russian' (Lewis, p. 298).

Besides such necessarily speculative comments, one has to take into account concrete instances of decision-making that remind us of analogous ones in other countries. Such a concrete example is presented by S. A. Chekhoeva, who compares two general education secondary schools in the district of Orenburg, inhabited by Tatars:

- 1 The secondary school in Tat-Kargalin is a Russian-medium school with Tatar as a school subject, since the Sovkhoz Kargal is situated near Orenburg, where part of the population works. Adults and children communicate in Russian and Tatar, so children have a good Russian vocabulary, enabling them to start with Russian as their instruction medium.

- 2 The secondary school in the settlement at Novomusinsk is organised as a Tatar-medium 'national school' with Russian as a school subject. Only Tatars live in the village, so the children have a poor working knowledge of Russian when they enter school. The sources of accessible evidence of the outcome of the organisational and curricular efforts to reinforce the instruction of the Russian language are too scarce to allow valid evaluation.

As in other socio-educational areas, one has to content oneself with the availability of case reports and locally confined quantitative inquiries (e.g. Lewis, pp. 298 *et seq.*). References to investigations with a wider range of evidence, however, are imprecise about sampling and approach, which makes them useful only as illustrative proofs. This is the case with G. P. Veselov's reference to inquiries conducted by the Ministry of Education of the RSFSR in 1974–5 to examine the level of mother tongue competence (Veselov, p. 47). The utilised tests consisted of a dictation in the primary grades, a translation in grades four to seven, and a composition in grades nine and ten. The average success amounted to 94.2 per cent (in primary grades, 92 per cent). Deficiencies were found above all in the Komi ASSR, where, among 583 exercises, only 9.1 per cent were without mistakes (Veselov, p. 48).

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

There is no doubt that bilingual and intercultural education play a significant role as integrative means of achieving the formation of an overarching Soviet culture. The accessible data, derivable from census returns, locally or regionally based inquiries and case reports, reveal a diversified picture of individual conditions and actions. Taken as a whole, the current state of bilingual and intercultural education seems to confirm E. Glyn Lewis' comment about the tension in 'national–Russian bilingualism' between governmental planning and fortuitous progress (cf. Lewis, p. 73).

National–Russian bilingualism, as the most prevalent form of bilingualism in the Soviet Union, is '... still a major priority of the Soviet educational system' (Comrie, p. 32), even when one takes into account the increase in non-Russian people who have acquired fluency in Russian, beyond the percentage of under 50 in 1970. This paper should provide evidence for this contention by referring to

sociological, educational, linguodidactic and motivational factors. In this respect, the fragmentary character of this study must be emphasised; further systematic investigations need to be conducted.

Let me end by considering 'the problem of reconciling diversity and unity', taken up by Nigel Grant in a highly convincing manner (Grant, 1982, p. 20; cf. Grant, 1981, p. 68). In discussing it, he seems to have put his finger on the crucial issue of global multi-culturalism and the place the Soviet Union occupies within it. He emphasises the substantial uniformity of the general policy within the Soviet system, with its implications for the curriculum and '... most important of all, the values taught' (Grant, 1982, p. 13; cf. Grant, 1981, p. 65). However, he is in no way deluded, by evaluations presented in Soviet policy documents, into delineating a consistency that would not stand any deep scrutiny. In an alternative conceptual view, the dichotomy between diversity and unity can be presented as the tension between 'Russification' and 'Soviet convergence' (cf. Grant, 1982, pp. 9, 19; cf. Grant, 1981, pp. 63, 67). Laying stress on the ideological and political dimension and official documents, one can gain sufficient evidence for proposing the thesis that 'Russification' is the predominant motor of bilingual education, as Isabelle Kreindler's article demonstrates. In this respect, however, I definitely agree with Oskar Anweiler's critical remarks and with his plea for a more differentiated evaluation of the sources available and particularly those which examine the relationships between language policy and language theory, as well as between the ideological–normative and the practical levels of Russian language teaching.

The practice of bilingual and intercultural education is certainly dominated by the ideological–normative framework, which exerts a great influence on teachers' everyday work. On the other hand, one should not neglect the 'side-effects' of the processes of industrialisation and modernisation, which have changed the Soviet people's ways of life in sum and which have also affected them on the micro-level, as evinced by an increasing number of multi-cultural communities. Finally, Nigel Grant's emphasis on the distinction between the teaching acquisition of Russian as a (new) mother tongue and as a second language (Grant, 1982, p. 15; cf. Grant, 1981, p. 64) needs to be given full weight in the discussion.

Summing up my concluding remarks, I should like to emphasise the theoretical value of inquiring into the facts, trends and problems suggested by the title of this chapter. On the one hand, the analysis of bilingual and intercultural education paves the way for a better

understanding of the Soviet educational system and its socio-political framework; on the other hand, by dealing with this theme, we can gain a good number of references and recommendations for an investigation of the global relevance of the Soviet variant. While the emphasis on the Soviet-bound aspect helps to highlight the specific character of the Soviet political system, the articulation of the global aspect may entail a certain degree of disenchantment, in so far as it invites us to relate our findings on bilingual and intercultural education in the Soviet Union to comparable situations recognisable in other cultural settings.

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# 7 Problems of Access to Higher Education in the USSR

DETLEF GLOWKA

The sociological aspects of Soviet higher education have been attracting a broad interest among research workers in the West for more than a decade. It seems to me that there are two reasons for this: first, problems with our own system of higher education make us ask if there are similar problems and comparable solutions in the Soviet Union. Second, Soviet sociological literature contains a wealth of information and hidden details of how the Soviet system of education really functions. I observe the increasing bulk of Soviet sociological literature concerning higher education with a feeling of frustration; I notice a growing quantity of facts and figures, but little progress of theory. As the weakness of this kind of research is on the whole well-known to those who are interested in the subject, I should like to confine myself to discussing the following five points:

- 1 Questionnaires are the main form of gaining information. The validity of this instrument in general and the limits of particular questionnaires remain unanalysed.
- 2 The quantitative analysis of obtained data rarely goes beyond the compiling of percentage scales and drawing comparisons between them. This kind of evaluation remains descriptive and cannot possibly be considered as an appropriate instrument for revealing more complex relationships.
- 3 The research workers usually fail to relate their own findings to data already gathered. Thus it remains an open question what significance the particular (and often contradicting) data may have.

- 4 While it is true that the subjects of inquiry are becoming more and more differentiated (i.e. the motives of occupational choices), the analytical framework according to which social reality is being made an object of research is a rather simple one and has made little progress over the years.
- 5 The theoretical output is meagre, if it is intended at all. Formulation and systematic testing of hypotheses occur rarely and, obviously, certain questions are being removed for ideological reasons while others are tackled again and again.

In consequence, it is possible to sum up the substance of the existing literature on the subject in the following way:

- (a) Educational aspirations of young people, especially gaining a place in higher education, vary in accordance with their social background.
- (b) Educational and professional aspirations of young people differ in some respects from the real educational and occupational opportunities provided by the state.
- (c) Steering of educational and professional aspirations into specific directions has proved difficult to achieve.
- (d) In some respects the educational system contributes to social equity; in others it promotes the reproduction of existing inequalities.
- (e) Under circumstances of limited access to socially more highly valued opportunities for education and training, the children with superior cultural backgrounds prove to have the greater chances for admission, the more competitive the access.

Seemingly, the leading figures of Soviet sociology of education have now become more aware of the insufficient research work within the field. They are demanding theoretically and methodologically improved approaches. It is, of course, up to Soviet scholars to improve their work; we have to wait for the outcome of these efforts. But it is up to us not to accept the Soviet Marxist interpretation of data already presented and to analyse them with regard to our own interest in understanding Soviet society. Naturally, our own work reflects our own assumptions, in terms of which we deal with data provided by Soviet sociology. Possibly this may lead us to become more conscious of what we want to explain and why. I am going to try this approach, taking access to higher education as the subject of my inquiry. For this

purpose, I will define 'access' differently from what is normally the case. Usually under this topic one finds an analytical treatment of student enrolments. I will concentrate my attention on the admission procedure, the regulations concerning access. In doing so, I conceive of regulations not only in terms of prescribed administrative rules but also in terms of the broader sense of regularities in social processes.

## ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION AS A PROBLEM OF SOCIAL POLICY

In many countries, East and West, controlling access to higher education is felt to be a pressing problem, especially in the Federal Republic of Germany. The problem is to develop a gearing mechanism to mediate between the academic aspirations of youth and the tasks of the higher education system in such a way as to frustrate as little as possible the social groups concerned. Admission procedures are a means of regulating the socio-political reality.

What shall be subject to direction and why? The problem appears where there are more people willing and able to study than there are places available in higher education. So, to a large extent, it is a problem of selection. The limitation of access is supposed to guard the institutions of higher education against being overburdened, to safeguard the quality of education provided and to prevent the creation of a situation in which certain qualifications are being produced in quantities considerably exceeding the demand of society. The selection procedure should be just and fair towards the applicants, i.e. based on some generally accepted criteria. Among these criteria, social equality of opportunity is, along with achievement, enjoying a higher priority, although in practice it may be differently interpreted and the order of priorities itself subject to fluctuations.

In Western countries we find the predominant notion that access to higher education should not be limited whenever possible, since study and education are considered as a matter of individual life planning with which the state must not interfere. Thus, broad access to higher education is thought to be a precondition of equality of opportunity in the light of this consideration and limiting access through a particular set of regulations can only be accepted under exceptional circumstances; a discrepancy between supply and demand is virtually to be balanced out in the same way as it is done in the market economy. Hence, recourse to a means of regulation should only be taken with due restraint.

If we relate these characteristics to the situation in the USSR, we find marked differences. The number of student places in higher education is being determined objectively, as it were, by the state of societal development. It does not appear to depend upon anybody's arbitrary decision. Equally, the academic aspirations of youth in themselves do not affect the number of students admitted to higher education. The function of the admission procedure is clearly defined: those best suited for study are to be offered places. In this way the process of social reproduction of society includes a mechanism that is based upon open competition. In pluralist democracies admission procedures are the result of a compromise between different interests and social objectives and are, therefore, full of contradictions as to conception, application and effect, but the means regulating admissions in the Soviet Union are clearly defined, clearly articulated and there are no doubts as to the legitimacy of their use. The example of access to higher education in the USSR allows us to study the use of a socio-political means of regulation in its pure form, as it were.

We have seen that the admission procedure balances out the discrepancy between the output of the secondary school system (the number of those willing to continue their studies) and the facilities of the higher education system. Instead of coping with this discrepancy by means of regulation, there would also be the possibility of coordinating both systems.

Secondary school attendance has enormously expanded in all highly industrialised countries during the past two decades, and although there did not seem to be any alternative to it, even within the framework of expansion, there is a repertoire of variants to limit the award of entrance qualification certificates. One strategy of limitation has become discernible again in the FRG for a number of years and is particularly marked in the GDR: the selectivity of secondary education. In Western countries an impressive expansion of higher education has taken place, in an attempt to keep in step with the growing demand for student places. As is well known, the Soviet Union has broadened the awarding of entrance qualifications in an exceptional way (they have almost become obligatory school-leaving qualifications). The expansion of higher education opportunities has been lagging behind; indeed, it is even approaching a phase of stagnation.

Let us ask if the state has sufficient gearing capacity to coordinate the two sub-systems of secondary and higher education, if this is considered its task. It seems to me that there is a lot to support the

assumption that in the past two decades, in pluralist democracies, higher education opportunities have proved to be controllable to a considerable degree, although this does not hold true for the structure and the qualitative performance of the higher education system. The state, as a dominant distributor of financial resources, is in a strong position here. In the secondary school system however, a larger number of social forces converge; the chances to carry through consistent structural reforms and certain educational improvements are small.

In the Soviet Union it may seem at first sight that the powerful state controls both variables. In fact, however, it is my conviction that the reproduction of the Soviet education system is at least as much a spontaneous process as it is a planned one. I cannot here develop this idea in detail, but by hinting at a number of facts I should like to indicate what the idea is. Khrushchev did not succeed in placing the secondary school behind the evening and shift school in their order of importance. All efforts to polytechnicise the secondary school did not succeed in changing the academic character of this institution. A marked shift in the proportions of students attending lower, middle and higher professional educational establishments to the benefit of the two former ones, which has been a declared objective for decades, did not come about. For at least one decade a number of problems have been pressing towards a coordinated reorganisation of the structure and administration of the secondary school system, yet nothing has moved in this direction. The measures to extend lower professional education have obviously come about because of the pressure of circumstances, rather than through prospective policy-making. The lack of state steering capacity could also be shown in areas which, compared to the ones mentioned, belong to the micro-structure of the educational system.

The present state of affairs is the result of the intended non-coordination of secondary and higher education. The extension of secondary education (leading to the award of the certificate of academic maturity) to all young people has quite definitely been no determined process, as the experience of other socialist countries and arguments against this policy within the USSR show. The Soviet state relied fully on the feasibility of limiting access to higher education by the rules of admission. The fact that, compared to other possible solutions, this instrument is easy to handle must make it a tempting object for state bureaucracy to use.

The use of this instrument only began to appear problematic when

unwanted side-effects began to crop up. Among the side-effects most often researched into is the disappointment on the part of the youthful population not admitted to higher education. This is where the character of the admission procedure as an instrument mediating between individual life goals and state-created structures has clearly revealed the existing dysfunctional relationship between the two.

The problem would not exist if the state could simply direct the young where it needs them. However, the young have now got the liberty to adopt an attitude of their own towards the educational offers of the state. So the state is forced to try to make their interests conform to its own priorities. As is well-known, there is no guarantee of success. We apparently owe the bulk of Soviet research in educational sociology, dealing with the hidden motives of the young and their susceptibility to influence, partially at least to the non-functioning of the directive measures. Explicitly or implicitly, the researchers legitimise their efforts with their intention of ameliorating the directive capacity of the state.

## THE STRUCTURE AND HANDLING OF ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The basic structure of the directive instrument has changed little over the decades. I find that this is an astonishing fact that needs to be explained. The core of the selection procedure for admission constitutes a knowledge test with uniform content and evaluation criteria at one of the higher education institutions. Around this core are grouped further criteria, the number and relative importance of which have been modified several times, e.g. marks in the school-leaving certificate, belonging to certain social stratum or group (e.g. peasant background, service in the army), practical experience, moral and political behaviour. So far, there have been three truly incisive approaches to changing the distributive effects of this instrument by introducing some additional ones: the obligation for 80 per cent of the students seeking admission to work for two years in industry (effective 1958–1965); the introduction of special classes and special schools which give their pupils a better chance of passing the entrance examinations (since 1966); and lastly, the introduction of preparatory departments with particular rules of recruitment and admission (since 1969).

The basic inventory of the admission procedure has changed little

despite its almost permanent open criticism (frequently published in newspapers and journals). Retracing this process over the decades could in its own right constitute the subject matter of a worthwhile inquiry. However, criticism tended to continue and certain arguments have tended to accumulate. Two approaches may be singled out in so far as the centre of selection is concerned: the one that favours locating it in the schools, the other locating it in the institutions of higher education.

To shift selection on to the schools would imply that school-leaving report marks and other forms of evaluation done by the schools would gain in importance and might even become preponderant. This would apparently be welcomed by many teachers, as it would upgrade their professional work and as marks could be employed more easily as stimuli for achievement. The Ministry for Higher and Specialised Secondary Education has rejected any such proposal with the main argument that marks, given in school reports, have proved to be of little prognostic value. Another argument the Ministry has also used cuts even further, saying that everybody should keep his chance of entering higher education, no matter where and when he acquired the knowledge necessary. This argument also hits those efforts that aim at increasing the number of institutions within the secondary system that principally prepare pupils for higher education.

To shift selection rather more towards the institutions of higher education would imply that, to a certain extent, criteria of achievement and other considerations might be specified by individual institutions, according to their specific interests. The Ministry was not prepared to give in to this kind of pressure, fearing that it would not then be able to control the procedure. An alternative path consistent with this approach would be to admit more students than the planned number of graduates and to perform the real selection during the time of study, particularly during the first year. This has been criticised on the grounds that costs – first of all monetary costs but perhaps also social costs – could be too high.

Thus, the ground has been held by the bureaucracy, which is interested in the existence of an instrument designed by it, controlled by it, and easily open to revision. In fact, however, the leading institutions of higher education apply the selection instrument in a qualified way, since they have considerably more and more qualified applicants than places. As occasional reports imply, they handle the procedure to their own satisfaction (through the use of interviews and additional tasks, for instance). This may explain why these influential

institutions put up with the existing rules. From time to time the Ministry emphasises the success of the selection procedure. It can refer to the fact that, as a rule, the student places, created according to plan, are being taken up and that those admitted graduate as intended (the dropout quota of 4 to 7 per cent is not considered disquieting).

It should be stressed here that the selection instrument is evading the control of its successfulness at an important point, for the studies are organised in such a way as to keep the dropout rate low. Some institutions of higher education admit to having accepted less qualified students, while the institutions employing graduates are often dissatisfied with their subsequent performance.

As regards certain types of courses, such as those for intending teachers, it has been suggested that there should be particular additional criteria which take into account the student's personality. However, as far as I know, the discussion on this subject has not so far resulted in any changes. Thus, the selection instrument of bureaucracy has not been exposed to any real pressure to prove its effectiveness. This also explains both, the fact that, as far as I can ascertain, there have been hardly any analyses of this problem and the fact that there has been no broad discussion of the prognostic value of the selection procedure, quite contrary to the situation in Poland, where this question has been intensively investigated. It is striking that, despite regular research work in psychology and educational sociology in the USSR, this important question remains uninvestigated. Perhaps in a bureaucratic set-up there is no real need for a proper inquiry into this important aspect of educational policy.

## **FUNCTIONS OF CONTROLLING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION**

I should now like to consider three functions of the policy to control access to higher education:

- 1 Filling the student places provided.
- 2 Promoting achievement.
- 3 Modifying social reproduction.

### **Filling the Student Places Provided**

The filling of the student places provided depends on finding an adequate number of applicants. Since the introduction of general

secondary education for all, the number of potential applicants has been greater than ever. So far, there has only been an occasional lack of candidates in certain faculties, which could be counterbalanced through the offer of special privileges (such as extra scholarships) and through publicity campaigns. A structural problem of a new kind crops up when there is a shift in the centre of gravity of student aspirations, such as the shift from technical subjects over to the humanities, as George Avis has pointed out in his research work. He has looked at this trend in the context of a rising quota of female students and of a partial turning away of potential male students from academic careers. A considerable, and apparently growing, number of youths are not considering higher education as the best form of preparation for specific professions, as do educational planners, but rather as an opportunity for individual development. I also think it possible that youths turn away from higher education, because, from an individual student's point of view, the period spent in higher education is a time of austerity as well as of social and ideological control. As far as I know, Soviet sociologists of education have not yet analysed why certain groups of youths do not want to go into higher education.

### **Promoting Achievement**

In its function of promoting the readiness to learn and the will to achieve, selection at the entrance to institutions of higher education has gained additional importance, since almost everybody nowadays gets secondary education. The certificate of maturity – formerly a proof of individual achievement – may today be gained by purely routine work. He who wants to get into higher education, especially into particularly esteemed institutions and subjects, has to comply with additional demands: excellent marks in certain subjects, conspicuous achievements in the optional courses, success in getting into a special class or special school, and participation in a preparatory course for the entrance examination or attending a preparatory department at an institution of higher education. As a matter of fact, a trend which divorces the entrance qualification from the level of secondary education has appeared. This tendency should grow in the near future. The reason for this is that the traditional academic bias of the secondary education curriculum has been criticised for a number of years, and today, as under Khrushchev, the school is expected to orientate the pupils towards practical occupations and prepare for

them. With the extension of secondary education to all young people, even those who would formerly have preferred to be challenged on a practical level, rather than a theoretical one, are now being attracted to academic pursuits.

This kind of argument is chiefly to be heard from representatives of the secondary PTU. From this position a revision of the whole concept of general secondary education has been called for on several occasions, with the tendency to reduce the academic content of study. The revisions of the secondary school curriculum in the last few years have, in fact, tended to move in this direction. The new blueprints for the Soviet school of the future, such as those formulated by Kostashkin and Skatkin, advocate a largely diversified secondary education, where the core of common content is smaller than it is at present and where the cohesion of the manifold subject matter beyond the core is attained by giving it equal value. It is very improbable, though, that its diversified character will turn out to be of equal value to higher education. It is not surprising, then, that supplementary courses for those who want to take up higher education are being mentioned in this context.

I am certain that institutions of higher education will watch carefully the possible shifts in the content of secondary education. In the past they have reacted with a great deal of sensitivity to any lowering of standards of achievement among their applicants. As far as I can see, there is at present no particular disquiet concerning this question.

In the years to come we shall have to watch closely which way the problem of differentiation within the Soviet secondary education system will move and how it will be solved. I should expect a more markedly separate organisation of institutions preparing for higher education. This could then profoundly affect access to higher education.

### **Modifying Social Reproduction**

It is one of the publicly declared aims of the higher education system in the USSR to change the social structure of Soviet society in the direction of more social homogeneity (*odnorodnost'*). This is based on the assumption that the higher education system is bringing forth a particular social stratum: the stratum of the *intelligentsia* – the specialists. It is, of course, an important question which way this stratum is recruited from the members of the existing social strata.

Since, according to the dominant ideology, Soviet society is on its way to classlessness, the higher education system is expected to contribute to social homogeneity. What the state of affairs actually is in this field is the subject of investigations by many scholars. The final section of this chapter attempts to deal with this question in greater detail.

The Soviets are undoubtedly right when they say of their educational system that it is supporting a tendency towards a greater social equality. The proportion of individuals in the population with higher education has been continually escalating, while that of those with lower educational qualifications has been decreasing quite dramatically in recent years. The lower qualification levels have, step by step, been brought closer to the higher education level. Content and methods of higher education differ from those at the other levels of education in quantitative rather than qualitative terms (i.e. demand a greater number of years of study), at least as compared with the situation in the West. Corresponding data concerning the educational standards of the population as a whole are being published repeatedly as proof of a pronounced tendency towards greater social equality.

Several scholars researching in this field have looked at three aspects of the equalisation of access to higher education: (a) distribution by sex, (b) regional and ethnic differences, and (c) social differences. Let me comment on these one by one.

### **Higher Education for Women**

The accessibility of higher education to women cannot only be regarded as a matter of percentages. It is certainly not accidental that 'feminised' study courses lead to professions with comparatively low pay and, presumably, with lower social prestige. I need not here go into the details of the fact that in professional and everyday life, as well as in the eyes of the public as a whole, Soviet women are anything but equal, nor do I want to enlarge on the composition of the Politbureau or of the Council of Ministers. It is significant that, although women make up more than 70 per cent of the teachers in the USSR, they furnish only 28 per cent of the directors of the secondary schools (1974). This, too, is an aspect of life in the USSR that Soviet educational sociology is not fond of mentioning. Calls for a change in the male/female proportion in certain study courses are being advocated by reference to the economic and practical needs of Soviet society and not through an appeal to put an end to the discrimination against women.

**Regional and Ethnic Differences and Higher Education**

The persistence of regional and ethnic differences in access to higher education is clearly pointed out by many researchers. George Avis says, 'It is easier to establish the existence and persistence of differences in access to higher education between nationalities than to account for them'. He concludes, 'The search for a general explanation has proved unsuccessful. A more promising, if onerous, approach . . . is one which treats each nationality as a particular case and explores in depth a broad set of possible factors' (Avis, p. 217). I agree. Possibly Soviet centralism and the data produced by it have weakened our perception of the variety which must actually be expected as a consequence of the size and heterogeneity of the country. Without doubt, the data concerning higher education may be of different relevance in different social contexts. A large number of VUZ graduates neither reliably indicates the quality of the educational system nor does it signify social equality or even social welfare. Therefore, we should avoid comparing figures by using expressions such as 'improved', 'deteriorated', 'gained ground', etc; they suggest a qualitative assessment and social valuation instead of merely indicating quantitative changes.

**Social Differences and Higher Education**

Concerning social composition of student enrolments, new as well as old data show that the different social strata are not represented according to their respective proportions in the population. Of particular importance I consider George Avis's finding that the slight reduction of the non-manual workers' over-representation is due to a smaller number of routine non-manual workers, while the highly qualified specialists maintain their privileged position. Indeed, one can say that the more rigorously the applicants for admission to higher education establishments are being grouped according to their special background and the faculties they are aiming at, the more clearly certain correlations can be revealed. Children of specialists living in urban regions prefer to study humanities and medicine at the universities. Furthermore, this varies according to regional circumstances. Using such data as the background, we may estimate the negligible value and, indeed, the misleading character of the broad correlations between a threefold model of social composition of the population which is still commonly used in Soviet statistics and higher education as a whole.

Obviously, Soviet sociology of education has started to reveal the social conditioning of occupational aspirations and of success in higher education in a more sophisticated way. This is inspired by practical and political considerations and an interest in finding a scientific basis for a more effective modulation of the aspirations of certain groups. Control of the access to higher education is to be refined. Inevitably, a more differentiated approach in defining social differences would make the existence of unequal chances even more obvious. On the other hand, research into access to higher education is supposed to reveal a growing tendency towards the equalisation of educational opportunities. Indeed, if data are sufficiently aggregated and a longer period of time is taken into consideration, it is possible, in fact, to identify a trend towards greater social equality in educational opportunities. As far as I can see, this trend has been founded upon the fact that up to now the stratum of specialists has been an expanding one. However, for some time now, the system of higher education has been stagnating, as far as quantity is concerned, and the stratum of specialists has reached a remarkable size. Under these circumstances there is increased probability that the self-reproduction of the specialist stratum obtains a larger share. Only a wide-spread downward social mobility of children from privileged homes could counteract such a trend. As far as I know, the published findings of Soviet research do not allow a proper insight into this aspect of the matter under consideration.

One of the verified results of recent sociological research in the USSR is the finding according to which children from culturally and economically privileged homes have better chances of getting into and succeeding in higher education than the children of the parents from other social strata, whenever competition and selection proceed on the basis of academic knowledge and intellectual achievement. At present, intellectual achievement is clearly being favoured as a means of regulating access to higher education and this will probably be reinforced in the near future. It has been proved that conceding a bonus with regard to academic achievement will not be mirrored during the study course; it leads to poor results in the final examinations, especially in the humanities. It has been stated that the chances of admission for children from the under-represented strata should be improved not by acknowledgement of social criteria but only by pedagogical means, i.e. by special preparatory courses.

Can we make any predictions as to how the problem of social homogenisation will be tackled in the near future? My impression is

that Soviet sociology is going on to give the process of equalisation a modified definition. The commonly used indicators of social strata will be supplemented by some others. Besides education and occupation, the following are envisaged: income, cultural and political activities, the proportion of creativity and routine at the working place, family life (especially its value orientation), social mobility within the generation of the parents, specific life conditions in the region, and so on. Such indicators would make it possible to accentuate certain differences within a given social stratum, on the one hand, and, on the other, to identify the processes important in reducing the differences between the social strata, whose significance has not until recently been noticed. For example, it has been indicated that chances of social advancement are unequal among the different categories of specialists and the intellectual manual worker has been identified as a new type within the working class.

This process may be regarded as an attempt to bring sociological analysis closer to the manifold complexities of social life. Simultaneously, it must be watched as another possible attempt at window-dressing, related to the existing real and quite pronounced social differences that are deeply rooted in the Soviet socio-political system.

Considering that we shall have to confront the changing conditions of social life and more sophisticated social research data in the near future, we have to ask ourselves, in a modified way, what the social composition of student enrolments may signify. We should become more conscious of our own value system and dominant ideas. Social equality may be only one aspect among several others; equality within the educational system gives little evidence of equality within society and a homogeneous society is not an ultimate objective in itself.

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# 8 Vocational Training in the 1980s – Problems and Perspectives

FRIEDRICH KUEBART

Soviet education on all levels and in all forms has a distinct vocational dimension. Vocational education is a process that does not end with formal schooling but goes far beyond this stage and continues throughout the adult's working life. The aim of this process of lifelong education is to produce both a qualified worker, able to fulfil the requirements of production in the age of the scientific–technological revolution, as well as a properly functioning, effective citizen of the Soviet state. The training in work skills and the socialisation in the moral values inherent in communist ideology are inseparably intertwined in this process.

Vocational education in a narrower sense focuses on the period preceding the individual's entry into the world of work or the initial phase of his working life in which he is equipped with the skills, abilities and habits necessary for his efficient performance as a worker. This phase of vocational training is mainly related to the age group 15–16 to 18–19. If we exclude higher education, the function of which, despite its explicit vocational orientation, goes beyond training for a job, this age range includes the upper stage of secondary education as well as the different types and programmes of post-secondary vocational training. In many countries this is also the post-compulsory stage; in the Soviet Union, however, vocational preparation in some form or other is a constituent part of compulsory education for most young people.

Educational provision for the 15–16 to 18–19 age group, in the interval between compulsory general schooling and higher education or the entry into working life, has become a major issue in educational

discussion and for policy-making in many countries, communist and Western alike. The problems are well-known and hardly need further elaboration. They include, for instance, the distribution of school-leavers or pupils into different educational channels, which, of course, predetermines to a great degree opportunities and positions later on in life, the choice of a career or job, access to higher education and its political and social implications, and the search for, and development of, alternatives to higher education. The latter may be perceived either as institutions or courses at the higher level, providing qualifications that are more practice-oriented than those of traditional higher education (i.e. the polytechnics in England) or as the channelling of young people into vocational training for the lower level jobs in the economy – the ‘mass jobs’ in Soviet terminology.

The Soviet economy is provided with a qualified workforce originating from three main sources. The most important channel for vocational training, especially in the sphere of highly qualified skills, is, in the view of Soviet educational decision-makers, the system of vocational–technical schools, which operates on the secondary as well as the post-secondary level. These schools, however, have never been able to satisfy the demand for skilled labour, so that the majority of young people entering the labour market have trained on the job in a variety of organisational forms and programmes differing in length and quality.

At the same time, the general education school has been charged, in varying degrees, with the task of providing some vocational preparation for its pupils, sometimes offering a formal qualification, enabling the school-leaver to take up a job in industry immediately after leaving school. Over the last thirty years Soviet educational policy has experimented with different forms of labour training and vocational preparation in the general schools. After the reforms of the Khrushchev era, which introduced full-scale vocational training into the school curriculum, had been abandoned in the mid-1960s, the deficiencies of this practice, together with new problems created by the gradual introduction of compulsory secondary education, heightened the awareness of Soviet educational planners of the more traditional channels of vocational training, i.e. vocational–technical schools and on-the-job training in industry. During the 1970s the former, in particular, showed a rapid expansion in numbers as well as profound changes in their structure and training programmes.

The central aims of Soviet economic policies – modernisation and intensification of production, together with the raising of productivity

of labour – required, and indeed still require, a better qualified labour force than has hitherto been available. In the 1970s, however, many sectors of the economy experienced an ever-growing shortage of skilled workers. The general education schools, in particular, were reproached for neglecting the needs of industry and for orienting young people towards academic life and non-manual jobs rather than fulfilling their task of preparing them for a career in the production sphere. Since 1977 a reorientation of educational policy has taken place, aimed at reintroducing into the school curriculum elements of vocational training for specific job skills. This meant, at least partly, a return to earlier practices. The reform of the general and vocational schools initiated under Andropov in June 1983, the draft guidelines for which were published on 4 January 1984, confirmed the future assignment of the schools as a provider of skilled labour. This will affect the role of both the general school and the vocational–technical system, a closer cooperation between which has been demanded in the guidelines. Although the guidelines have indicated a general direction for training policies in the 1980s and beyond, many problems will remain a matter for discussion, the more so, that there have been conflicting views among Soviet experts over future priorities as regards important aspects of educational provision for young people at the upper secondary stage and after completion of the full course of the general secondary school.

This paper does not attempt to give an overview of the structures of, and current practices within, the Soviet system of vocational training. It focuses on vocational training in its traditional forms, vocational–technical schools and on-the-job training, and confines itself to examining a few salient issues facing Soviet educational and training policy in the 1980s. Among these are, as has been underlined by the draft Guidelines for Reform, the future relation between the vocational and general schools in quantitative as well as functional terms, and the merging of general education and vocational training in the curricula of secondary vocational–technical schools. Of equal importance are the functions of training under the auspices of industrial authorities within the training system as a whole and the attempts at bringing it into line with a centralised and uniform state training policy.

## THE CHANGING POSITION OF VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOLS IN THE SOVIET EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The Brezhnev era did not see comprehensive education reform that would have affected the system and its structure as a whole. Apart from the abandonment of vocational training in general schools, which coincided with, and partly preceded, Khrushchev's downfall in the mid-sixties and the tidying-up work which followed, educational policy has, up till now, been geared to stability and continuity and reforms on a smaller scale. The policy of introducing general secondary education was associated, however, with a rapid expansion of the education system at all levels and particularly at the upper secondary stage. This process was, on the whole, completed by 1975. One innovation it produced was the emergence of a new type of secondary school, which provides a secondary leaving certificate along with training for a skill, the Secondary Vocational-Technical School (SPTU). It also gave rise to another newcomer in the sphere of vocational education, the Technical School (TU), which provides those who have completed general secondary school with the qualifications of a skilled worker through its – preponderantly – one-year course of training. Both types developed from the prototypes that had operated locally since the 1950s. They were introduced officially in 1969 and 1966 respectively as an answer to the pressing needs of the labour market, namely, the soaring demand for qualified manpower, as well as to the social problems entailed in the rising numbers of school-leavers with the formal entitlement to apply for access to higher education *vis-à-vis* a limited and not equally increased number of places in higher and secondary specialised education.

In this process it was not only the general schools that underwent a profound change in their functions; the same applied to the vocational sector, which also saw changes in its internal structure, as did, in fact, the whole upper secondary level of education.

Although compulsory secondary education has been extended to the age of 17 or 18, depending on the type of school, the pivotal point for the distribution of pupils into different educational tracks, and the first crucial moment for the individual's decision concerning his future career, is still the completion of the eighth grade at the age of 15. The choice at this stage is between grades nine and ten, i.e. the upper stage of the general secondary school (1980 – 'about 60 per cent'), the secondary vocational-technical school (1980 – 19.6 per cent) and the

secondary specialised school (1980 – 10.1 per cent) (Usanov, p. 28). In 1980 another 8 per cent of the 15-year-olds attended a general education course at evening school, probably combining this in most cases with vocational training at a ‘normal’ one- to two- year vocational–technical school.

The largest proportion of pupils is still taken on by the general school, which up till now has retained the ‘leading role’ in providing general education, the task it is publicly assigned to do by its leading administrators. This claim, however, has recently tended to sound somewhat ill-founded, if one looks at the dynamics of the development of the secondary vocational–technical school, the numbers of which rose from 660 with 190 400 pupils in 1970 to 4596 with 2 229 000 pupils in 1982 (*Narodnoe khozyaistvo*, p. 373), and which, in 1975, had accommodated no more than 9.4 per cent of the eight-grade leavers. In regional terms there are, however, considerable differences. While the proportion of entrants into these schools in Leningrad amounted to 43 per cent of eighth-grade leavers way back in 1978, Tadzhikistan, for example, lagged far behind with a mere 9.3 per cent, a state of affairs that looked only slightly more favourable in other Central Asiatic Republics (Sidorov, p. 35). For 1985 the proportion of the SPTUs is expected to rise to 37.5 per cent (Sidorov, p. 35) and by 1990, according to the forecasts made by planners within the All-Union Research Institute for Vocational–Technical Education in Leningrad, it will have overtaken the general schools, as can be seen from the tentative and provisional indicators for the distribution of pupils in 1990 (Ivanov, p. 44), shown in Table 8.1.

TABLE 8.1

	1990 (per cent)	1970 (per cent)
Ninth grade	45.3	60.3
SPTU	51.2	2.3
Secondary specialised school	3.5	11.7

This dramatic redistribution in favour of the SPTU would, as is clearly shown by the figures in Table 8.1, only be possible at the expense of the other two types of secondary school. Together with the falling enrolments due to demographic factors, this will, no doubt, entail heavy competition and maybe even conflicts over the distribution of pupils, in particular between the two main contenders.

It has been estimated that in 1985, given the present minimal growth rate of access to higher and secondary specialised education, only 70 per cent of the places available at PTUs could be filled anyway. As regards the secondary specialised schools or *tekhnikums*, the function of which is to provide well-qualified 'sergeants of industry' (*Pravda*, 9.2.1979), there seems to be a widespread agreement among experts that the training of eighth-grade leavers should be more or less abandoned in favour of entrants with a secondary certificate. At present the proportion between entrants with eight years' general schooling and holders of a secondary diploma is 1:2 (*Narodnoe khozyaistvo*, p. 468). As *tekhnikum* graduates are often employed as skilled workers anyway, a number of these institutions should, it is argued, be reorganised into SPTUs, while the remainder continue their work on a higher level, providing qualifications closer to those of higher education (Kostin, 1981b, p. 20).

On the whole, however, the general schools will have to bear the brunt of the redistribution. The reorganisation of existing schools with good training facilities into SPTUs is not ruled out, as the expansion of the latter is seen as an objective requirement which serves the interests of the economy and of young people alike (Kostin, 1979, p. 13). It should be added that the quality of vocational training provided in general education schools through the Training and Production Combines or other organisational means is looked upon by the representatives of vocational-technical schools as inferior and dispensable (Sidorov, p. 86; Migas, p. 84). They would like to confine the general school to a strictly pre-vocational function, emphasising at the same time its crucial role for vocational guidance. Measures of the kind outlined above would seem, however, to be insufficient for the restructuring of the upper secondary stage in favour of the SPTU, as long as there is sufficient demand – often supported by schools and school authorities – for general school places.

The established means of preparing pupils for choosing a vocational school is vocational orientation through labour training and other school activities, including the moral influencing of pupils, though this kind of social engineering has only met with a limited success (cf. Hörner and Schlott). On the other hand, some teachers regard PTUs as a way of getting rid of less promising youngsters and to a certain degree PTUs have tended to be treated by secondary schools as a kind of remedial institution where dropouts and 'difficult' pupils get a last chance, and this has greatly influenced the public image of the vocational schools.

Another suggestion put forward is to make secondary vocational schools more attractive by opening up entry into higher education to a greater proportion of their leavers than is now the case: only recently this was raised to 10 per cent of the most successful students. It is expected that this would, at the same time, make the training of engineers and other specialists in higher education more efficient, because it would be based upon the qualifications acquired at the SPTU. In this way the SPTU will, besides training blue-collar workers, take on the additional function of preparing a growing proportion of pupils for higher education.

Clearly, individual measures for improving the image of the vocational schools or for introducing a more rigid and coordinated process for planning the distribution of entrants into the different school types, are no substitute for a coherent policy for vocational training and reshaping the upper secondary stage. Discussions before the announcement of the school reform in 1983 tended to favour a more clear-cut division of roles between the general and vocational schools, advocating ultimately a horizontally structured model in which general education, including vocational guidance and a pre-vocational education, would be followed by training in vocational institutions. For all those not entering higher education after school, the introduction of compulsory vocational education was suggested (Sidorov, p. 33).

A consecutive structure, which was, in the long run, to supersede the parallel organisation of the present school system was not only aimed at by the planners within the State Committee for Vocational-Technical Education. A similar solution was put forward on the eve of the current reform by the Minister for Public Education, who is mainly responsible for the general schools. Refuting the idea of training for specific job skills in the general school, he emphasised the polytechnical character of school education, which should be followed by specialised training, as was basically the case in the current 'rationalised' system that has been emerging over the past years (Prokof'ev, pp. 3-11). This solution would obviously safeguard the interests of the general education sector as well as give vocational institutions scope for their further development. It would, however, yield results in providing the qualified manpower required by industry only in accordance with the corresponding expansion of the vocational schools.

The Reform Guidelines of January 1984 have not endorsed the consecutive model, as this apparently seemed too radical (*Pravda*,

4.1.1984). However, they seized on some of the proposals made in recent discussions, such as opening up entry to higher education from the vocational schools, thus aiming at greater 'parity of esteem' between them and the general schools. Other suggestions were explicitly refuted: there will be no changes in the intake and structure of the secondary specialised schools.

As regards the future structure of upper secondary education, the reform proposals came out in favour of a comprehensive redistribution of enrolments between the general and the vocational-technical schools: the intake of the latter is to be doubled in the years ahead and would thus be raised to approximately 50 per cent. The general schools will, at the same time, be charged with providing a full-scale vocational training, although of a more elementary nature, for the so-called 'mass jobs' that do not require a lengthy and costly training at SPTUs, which will remain the only school type within the realm of vocational-technical training. SPTU training will be reserved for jobs demanding more highly qualified skills, especially those in technologically advanced industries. Thus vertical differentiation will be retained, supplemented by a division of labour for vocational training between general schools and SPTUs. The different types are formally held together by a common label: together they are to form the new 'general and vocational school', which towards the end of the decade is to provide vocational training, compulsory for all young people not entering higher education. In a more distant future this structure is to give way to the emergence of a unified upper secondary school about which, however, only vague and non-committal statements are made in the draft guidelines.

## CURRICULUM PROBLEMS OF THE SECONDARY VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL

The secondary vocational-technical schools emerged from close cooperation between the existing one to two year PTUs and general evening schools. Consequently, their curricula at first were a simple addition of those of the two earlier types. This not only constituted a heavy workload of over 40 hours per week for the pupils. The syllabuses of the two year PTUs also proved inadequate for training in modern industrial skills and providing the qualifications required by the programme for the modernisation of industry. The satisfying of demand for highly qualified manpower as a basis and precondition for

industrial development was, however, one of the strongest economic justifications for the introduction of the new school type.

The relations between vocational instruction and general education, the linking of contents of the academic and theoretical subjects to the practical side of training, and the raising of the standards and quality of the latter were among the most crucial problems to be tackled both on a theoretical level and in curriculum development. New curricula, developed in close cooperation with general education authorities and the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences and introduced in 1972, proved insufficient.

A fresh attempt at designing training programmes specifically for the SPTUs was made in the following years. The new curricula resulting from this were introduced in the schools from 1978–9 onward (see Table 8.2 as an example). Although detailed syllabi had to be drawn up for a great number of skills and specialties, they were based on a common framework. This consisted of two major groups of

TABLE 8.2 Curriculum for the Secondary Vocational–Technical School (1978)

(Training of fitters – electromechanics)  
Length of training: 3 years

Cycles and subjects	1st year	No. of lessons			Total of lessons	Total of lessons in the 9th and 10th grades of the general sec. school <sup>1</sup>
		2nd year	3rd year			
<i>Vocational – technical cycle</i>						
1 Production training	546	564	990		2100	
2 Special technology	80	76	37		193	
3 Electrotechnics and fundamentals of industrial electronics	46	93	–		139	
4 Electric materials technology	–	38	–		38	
5 Technical drawing	57	–	–		57	
6 Fundamentals of labour and production economics	–	–	27		27	
	729	771	1054		2554	

Table 8.2—continued

(Training of fitters – electromechanics)  
Length of training: 3 years

Cycles and subjects	No. of lessons			Total of lessons	Total of lessons in the 9th and 10th grades of the general sec. school <sup>1</sup>
	1st year	2nd year	3rd year		
<i>General education cycle</i>					
1 Russian language and literature	87	76	54	217	245
2 Mathematics	127	114	81	322	332·5
3 History	104	135	—	239	245
4 Social studies	—	—	71	71	70
5 Geography	—	—	54	54	70
6 Biology	—	—	64	64	105
7 Physics and astronomy	160	135	17	312	332·5
8 Chemistry	94	97	—	191	210
9 Foreign language	80	34	—	114	70
	652	591	341	1584	1680
1 Fundamentals of aesthetics	40	—	—	40	
2 Basic military training	47	38	54	139	
3 Physical education	80	76	27	183	
Tutorials and optional courses	—	—	—	350	
Exams	—	48	42	90	
Total	1548	1524	1518	4940	(2520)

<sup>1</sup> Author’s calculation based on the assumption that the school year in grades 9 and 10 consists of 35 weeks.

Source: ‘Uchebnyi plan i programmy dlya podgotovki kvalifitsirovannykh rabochikh v srednikh professional’no-tekhnicheskikh uchilishchakh. Professiya-Slesar’-elektromontazhnik’, Moscow, 1979.

subjects, the vocational–technical and the general education cycle, plus subjects such as aesthetics, basic military training and physical education. The extent of general education was fixed at just under 1600 hours for the three-year course, a slight reduction in volume as compared with the number of hours prescribed for the general secondary school for the nine subjects concerned (1680 hours). Both this and the slight variations in hours assigned to individual subjects were agreed upon with the general education authorities, and they are not seen as impeding the validity of the secondary education provided by the SPTU. Moreover, it is alleged that structural connections between the subject matter of the general education cycle and the subjects of the vocational cycle make up for a smaller number of hours for individual subjects. But then, of course, the quality of education and performance of a school type depends less on the amount of time spent there than on factors such as quality of the teaching force, abilities and motivation of the students and the facilities available, etc.

The practice of teaching in the SPTUs in the 1970s had proved that the mere combination of the curricula of two different types of schools, general schools and PTUs, was unsatisfactory. Although the new curricula succeeded in reducing the workload for students to 36 hours per week, criticism continued to be directed towards the lack of connection between the subjects taught up to the eighth grade and in the SPTUs. It turned out, moreover, that not only did curriculum development for SPTUs require a specific approach, but also that teaching methods could not simply be borrowed from the general school. Owing to the type of pupil attracted by the vocational school, teaching proved to be more difficult and to demand a different kind of organisation if the PTU was to be successful in transmitting the same amount of knowledge as the general school, and thus in providing a comparable full-scale secondary education. Special hours for ‘tutorials’ were set aside in the curriculum in order to assist ‘weak’ pupils to catch up with their education (Sedakov, p. 19).

As experience has shown, the specific character and functions, and the ensuing differences in the structure of the curricula of individual school types, do not allow a direct transfer of a model concept of ‘complete secondary education’ from one type to another. It had to be acknowledged that the general education provided had, to a certain extent, to be adapted to the specific conditions and the educational ‘profile’ of each type. For the SPTU this meant the dovetailing of its syllabi for all subjects with those of the preceding general school and establishing closer links between the general and special vocational

cycles within the SPTU curriculum. These, indeed, were the objectives underlying the development of the 1978–9 curricula. However, according to critical comments expressed by Soviet educationists, they have not been attained, due to the lack of theoretical clarification of the function of general education at the upper secondary level and of its relations to vocational education (Batyshev, 1980, pp. 83–9; Borisov, p. 13). As a result, although the contents of general secondary education are marked by a certain amount of variation, an identical core or common minimum safeguarding the alleged equality of the education received in each of the schools is to be maintained. This is to be embodied in the concept of the ‘uniform level of general education’ in all secondary schools, which is now being discussed among Soviet educators. It is assumed that this new concept will allow for the homogeneity in knowledge deemed to be indispensable as well as for the degree of flexibility required by the specific roles of the different kinds of secondary schools (Monakhov, p. 70). Curriculum development for the SPTUs in the 1980s, as carried out by the research institutions under the State Committee for Vocational–Technical Education in close cooperation with the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, will certainly follow this line, the more so, as the Reform Guidelines demanding a revision of all curricula seem to be in favour of this approach.

The amount of time devoted to the cycle of vocational–technical subjects common to all specialties amounts to about 2550 hours, a proportion of about 57 per cent of the time reserved for the two main cycles of instruction, including aesthetic, physical and military education, as compared to general education’s share of roughly 35 per cent of the curriculum. Within the vocational cycle there are, however, variations between the time scheduled for practical or production training and the theoretical subjects focusing upon the technological fundamentals of different skills, depending upon the actual demand for more or less theoretical knowledge.

Parallel to the formulation of the new 1978–9 curricula, a revision, or rather an enlargement, of the list of occupations and skills in which training was to be carried out at vocational–technical institutions was undertaken. The number of skills for which training was offered in SPTUs was raised from 607 to 926, the corresponding figures for technical schools being 829 and 1297 (Solov’ev, p. 200). This considerably enhanced the range of activities of the vocational–technical schools and answered the criticism that they were not sufficiently comprehensive to satisfy the needs of a differentiated

labour market. One particular objective has been to offer training in specialities for which previously only training on the job in industry was possible.

The development of programmes of instruction is based on the description of qualification requirements for each skill, as laid down in the *Unified Handbook on Wages and Qualifications*, compiled under the auspices of the State Committee for Labour and Social Problems. The *Handbook* contains the specification of about 7000 skills since its revision in the 1970s, which aimed at establishing a nomenclature of occupations common to all branches and sectors of the economy and uniform requirements for similar skills, graded in turn according to qualifications required for the performance of specific tasks (Tatur, p. 81; Batyshev, 1980, p. 86). The problem is that, owing to technological change, descriptions of skills laid down in the *Unified Handbook* tend to become obsolete after a few years, so that a constant revision of the programmes of instruction based on up-to-date research into changes in the occupational system has become necessary.

The fact that the *Unified Handbook* lists 7000 skills indicates a high degree of specialisation in the Soviet occupational structure. However, this no longer corresponds to the rapidly changing conditions in the sphere of production, which require a mobile and flexible workforce. Emphasis has, therefore, been laid on developing joint curricula, combining together narrower, but related, skills. About 35 per cent of the jobs contained in the new list mentioned above are so-called broad profile or combined occupations, such as the one referred to in Table 8.2: fitter and electromechanic. This percentage may well increase in the 1980s, even though broader profiles could require increasing the time to be spent in training up to as many as four years in some occupations (Tatur, pp. 155–65).

## VOCATIONAL–TECHNICAL SCHOOLS AND ON-THE-JOB TRAINING IN INDUSTRY

The emergence of secondary vocational–technical schools and technical schools which provide general school-leavers with training in blue-collar skills has had significant effects on the future of existing forms and types of vocational training. This is not only true for the one- and two-year PTUs but also for the different forms of on-the-job training within industry, which still give an initial skill training to the majority of school-leavers entering the world of work. For some time

the main question under discussion among educational planners and economists has been whether this 'binary' structure of vocational training was to be retained or whether in the long run all training activities should be concentrated in vocational schools at the secondary and post-secondary level. An additional dimension has been added to this issue by the emphasis laid on the vocational role of general education schools by the 1984 Reform Guidelines.

As regards the ordinary one- or two-year PTUs, the general opinion is that they will disappear from the scene during the next few years and will certainly have done so by 1990. The process of reorganisation of these schools has, however, not always been as fast as the planners had expected, the main obstacles being slow construction of new schools, the reluctance of industrial enterprise to provide schools with adequate – and expensive – new resources for training in highly qualified skills and the lack of qualified teaching staff. In 1982 there were still 692 schools of this type with 321 000 pupils, which was 12.6 per cent of total enrolment in vocational–technical schools (*Narodnoe khozyaistvo*, p. 374). As reorganisation can thus be looked upon as fairly successful on the whole, earlier forecasts that the ordinary PTU would be 'forgotten' by 1985 (Belkin, p. 2) could prove somewhat premature, and some planners expect that even in 1990 these schools will still retain a share of some 7 per cent of enrolments in vocational–technical schools (Sidorov, p. 94).

More controversy has arisen over the future of on-the-job training alongside the system of vocational–technical schools. Up till now on-the-job training of school-leavers has been an indispensable source of qualified manpower for industry. This is revealed by examining the available statistics, which are, however, somewhat crude, as the figures for workers trained on the job ('in new occupations') include not only school-leavers who went directly from school to work but also people who had previously been working without qualifications or were retrained in a different job. If we start from the assumption of Soviet planners – who, by the way, are calling for more detailed statistics in this field – that the proportion of the latter groups is about 40 per cent (Sidorov, p. 96), then, of the new workers receiving some kind of vocational training in 1982, roughly 36 per cent graduated from vocational–technical schools, 3 per cent were trained in vocational schools under the direction of various industrial ministries and 61 per cent had undergone on-the-job training (calculated from *Narodnoe khozyaistvo*, pp. 373, 376). Moreover, these general figures conceal very substantial variations between different branches. Thus, in retail

business and the catering industry 90 per cent of workers are trained on the job, and in the building industry 70 per cent (Kovrigin, p. 74).

Back in 1978 a conference of leading economists and labour experts on the problems of labour resources spoke out vehemently against such critics of on-the-job training who saw no future in this form of providing workers with basic skills in short-term courses ranging between a week and six months and who favoured its abolition (Kostin, 1979, p. 228). Not only were PTUs not able to satisfy the demands of enterprises for skilled and semi-skilled labour; for those factories too small to have a PTU of their own, this was often the only way of getting hold of trained workers. Moreover, this form of training could be geared directly to the special needs of each enterprise; and even big enterprises with one or more vocational-technical schools had to rely on additional on-the-job training facilities as a complement to PTU training, which covered only part of their complex job structure. The conference argued in favour of establishing a firm division of labour between vocational training in PTUs and in production, on the basis of defining the qualifications structure of each branch of the economy and, accordingly, laying down the training demands for each of these categories. One prognosis referred to above estimates that even in 1990 about 13 per cent of the school-leavers (grade ten) will go directly into work and require on-the-job training, while roughly 35 per cent will be admitted to technical schools (Ivanov, p. 44).

The importance of on-the-job training has also been confirmed by the Soviet government. A decree of June 1979, devoted specially to this area, practically endorsed the recommendations put forward by the experts ('O merakh', pp. 359-65). It was aimed at tidying up the diversity of organisational structures, courses and other forms of training and training programmes. This was considered necessary, as previously individual production units or even their branches often developed their own training systems, ranging from initial training to retraining and advanced courses for higher qualifications, and designed their own training programmes and materials. For this reason, on-the-job training was to be more strongly controlled and subjected to generally binding norms, the objective being to establish a centralised training policy which would dominate over the particularistic interests of individual enterprises. The State Committee for Vocational-Technical Training was given additional powers for coordinating training activities in industry. An Inter-authority Council for Vocational Training was established, and its decisions are binding

for all ministries and bodies that provide on-the-job training. This, it is hoped, will create a firm basis for more efficient planning and for the introduction and development of obligatory training programmes for identical jobs in different branches of the economy.

In the wake of the decree of 1979 new training programmes were developed on the basis of directives issued by the State Committee. The devising of the actual programmes is up to the individual industrial authorities, which are to cooperate with a new institute for curriculum development and implementation in vocational training, the All Union Scientific Centre for Training Methods. The work required can be illustrated by the fact that on-the-job training is imparted in some 4500 occupations (Kravtsov, p. 11) although these are arranged in groups for which a more or less identical structure of training programmes is laid down. In the Georgian Republic alone thirty-four ministries and authorities and a further forty-seven organisations or enterprises were assisted in devising their programmes (Erbalidze, p. 56).

On-the-job training, which historically has developed out of the training of individual apprentices, is organised in three different forms recognised by the 'Model Statutes for Vocational Training of Workers within Industry', passed on 4 March 1980. The Statutes differentiate between individual instruction, group (or brigade) instruction and training courses with a maximum length of six months (*Byulleten'*, pp. 16–28). Among these organisational forms the training courses, apart from teaching practical skills, generally include the provision of basic theoretical knowledge and will, therefore, be given priority in future development. In 1979 an average of 38 per cent of trainees received their training in courses and 62 per cent in groups or through individual instruction (Katkhanov, p. 63). There are, however, considerable variations between different branches: whereas in the coal and gas industries 60–70 per cent of trainees are in courses, in the radio industry this proportion is less than 5 per cent (Kostin, 1981a, p. 7). Large enterprises are able to set up special Centres for Training Courses (*Uchebno-kursovye kombinaty*) in which initial training, retraining and training for job advancement take place. These centres often operate as common institutions for several enterprises. As they require a proper organisational structure, they are likely to develop into a new type of vocational school, comparable in their performance to vocational–technical schools (and in some instances cooperating with them), but under the direct control of an industrial authority instead of the State Committee and its local agency.

Very often, however, factory managers are not prepared to set aside funds for this more expensive form of training. Pressed by shortage of labour, they tend to shorten the length of time to be spent on training and to regard theoretical knowledge as dispensable. Nevertheless, trainees who have received their training on the job are awarded, in many instances, the same skill grade as those who have completed their time at the vocational–technical school. This is, at the same time, one of the reasons why many school-leavers prefer on-the-job training to the lengthy and more arduous training at a vocational–technical school.

As regards the future relation between vocational–technical schools and on-the-job training, attempts will be made to achieve a more clear-cut division of labour between them, whatever the organisational structure of the latter is like. PTU training will concentrate on complex, innovative jobs requiring a high level of theoretical knowledge, while on-the-job training will be reserved for simpler ‘mass’ occupations. Although this function has also been assigned to the general schools by the Reform Guidelines, there is as yet no indication that training within industry will become obsolete and be replaced by something else. On the contrary, as one of the leading figures in Soviet manpower policy has stressed, on-the-job training is regarded as of vital importance and a complement to the other forms of training (Kostin, 1979, p. 14). On the other hand, there is reason for doubting the efficiency of vocational training in general schools if one recalls the fact that up till now no more than about 25 per cent of school-leavers continue to work in the specialisms in which they received their labour training. School-leavers entering the sphere of production will, therefore, continue to require some initial training, whereas at the same time there will be a growing demand for retraining and upgrading of skills. As a result, Soviet training policy will be faced with a growing pressure to shape a more coherent system out of the existing multitude of training activities.

## TOWARDS INTEGRATED POLICY-MAKING IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Although education in the Soviet Union is regarded as a single and unified system, its main sectors – general schools, vocational–technical education and higher and secondary specialised education – are directed and controlled by different government agencies: the

Ministry of Public Education, the State Committee for Vocational–Technical Education and the Ministry for Higher and Secondary Specialised Education. All these agencies, which are ultimately responsible to the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Central Committee of the Communist Party, administer vocational education in their respective areas at the upper secondary level. As has been shown above, there are difficulties not only in coordinating the work in the sphere of curricula but also in reconciling the conflicting interests in regard to planning enrolments and channelling pupils into the different tracks.

The administration of vocational education is closely related to manpower planning, and the bodies controlling the occupational system have traditionally exerted a considerable amount of influence over the administration, thus rendering its power structure particularly complex. This applies especially to higher and specialised secondary education and to the vocational–technical education sector. Although the State Committee for Vocational–Technical Education (*Gosprofobr*) is the central agency for the execution of government policies in the vocational training of blue-collar workers, its powers and responsibilities vary in the different areas of the training system. ‘Dual’ responsibilities for vocational–technical education in the form of sharing of power between the State Committee and industrial ministries are a salient feature in the running of this system (a similar structure, though with a different distribution of responsibility, applies to higher and specialised secondary education).

The different types of vocational–technical schools are under the direction of the State Committee and its subsidiaries on the republic and regional levels. The latter, however, are also under the control of the Republic Councils of Ministers. Although the Union and Republic State Committee have budgets of their own, funding of the vocational–technical schools is left partly to the industrial authorities and enterprises to which they are attached, especially if they are located on their premises. Thus the quality of training, though formally carried out in accordance with the prescriptive norms issued by the State Committee, is to a large extent the responsibility of industry. This has created considerable differences in the standard of training, and recently a new system of financing has been proposed. This would be based on a levy system, to which all enterprises would have to contribute with a view to achieving an equal sharing of the burdens (Sidorov, p. 40).

Vocational schools outside the vocational–technical sector, which

are run by a few branch ministries and other authorities, are also obliged to adhere to the training regulations laid down by the State Committee. The majority of these schools are former factory and works apprentice (FZU) schools still in existence in such branches of the economy as consumer goods, dairy and catering industries, agriculture or consumer cooperatives (Batyshev, 1981, pp. 292–3; Matthews, pp. 67–8). In quantitative terms they are no longer significant and their output in numbers of qualified workers has declined from 240 000 in 1975 to 186 000 in 1982 (*Narodnoe obrazovanie*, p. 147; *Narodnoe khozyaistvo*, p. 376). There has been a strong tendency since the 1960s to transfer them to the responsibility of the State Committee, but at the same time new schools of this type have been set up as a flexible means of satisfying the manpower requirements of the industries concerned.

The largest sector of vocational training not run directly by the State Committee is on-the-job training, which is primarily in the hands of branch ministries and authorities. According to the Model Statutes issued in 1980, coordinating and controlling powers in this sector are also vested in the State Committees for Vocational–Technical Education and for Labour and Social Problems (*Goskomtrud*), whose decisions on issues of training policy are binding for all branch authorities and enterprises. This applies particularly to training programmes developed by *Gosprofobr* for occupations encompassing different branches. Programmes for occupations specific to one particular branch are developed by the authority responsible, but endorsed by *Gosprofobr*.

The main function of *Gosprofobr* is, on a more general level, to ensure a ‘unified government policy in vocational education of blue-collar workers’, not only in regard to training within industry but concerning all other forms and aspects of vocational–technical training as well. This goes back to 1966, when, in the early days of the Brezhnev era, administration of the economy was reorganised on the basis of branches as opposed to the regional principle favoured by Khrushchev. *Gosprofobr* was then given enhanced powers for coordinating training activities as well as direct control over vocational–technical schools (Batyshev, 1981, pp. 267–8; Solov’ev, pp. 222–6). The aim was to overcome narrow and selfish interests of individual branches in manpower policy, to achieve greater homogeneity in training standards, as well as to provide the qualifications required by technological changes.

These attempts at streamlining vocational training met, however,

only with limited success, and in 1978 a leading administrator complained of the intractability of the problems of regulating training activities outside the vocational–technical schools (Sokolovskii, in *Pravda*, 20.6.78). Very often, rules and norms laid down centrally are disregarded by ministries and enterprises, which follow their own practices and methods not only in regard to length and contents of training but also in conferring formal grade qualifications. In 1979 and 1980 several decrees were issued in order to remedy the situation. The new statutes for vocational–technical schools and for training on the job within production mentioned above were aimed at clarifying the different responsibilities. The coordinating and controlling powers of *Gosprofobr* were enlarged, in particular as regards training outside the vocational–technical schools. These measures were to create a basis for making all authorities concerned with vocational training comply with central policy lines. Thus, the considerable amount of diversity in the practical approach to vocational training that can still be observed is tending to be superseded by growing centralisation for the sake of efficiency and comprehensive planning.

By drawing the general school system into the scope of vocational training facilities, the draft Guidelines for Educational Reform bring yet another administrative body into training policy – the Ministry of Public Education – which, in contrast to the industrial ministries, remains outside the sphere of influence of the State Committee. The ensuing problems are to be dealt with by a new pattern of Inter-Authority Commissions on all levels of educational administration from the Council of Ministers of the USSR downwards. They are to coordinate the work of all agencies concerned with vocational training, focusing in particular on the planning of enrolments and distribution of pupils. Whatever concrete powers this new superstructure will be endowed with, it adds to the complexity of the administrative framework of vocational education as a whole, and will make it more difficult to achieve the unified policy structures that are needed to solve the problems ahead in the fields of recruitment, qualification and allocation of labour resources – one of the scarcest resources of the Soviet Union in the years to come.

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# 9 Art and Art Education in the USSR

JOHN BIGGS

Of any system of education one may ask, 'Education for what?' Thus, one may ask what are Soviet Art Institutes for? What are their aims? An answer may be found in the *Ustav* or Rules and Regulations of the *Soyuz Khudozhnikov SSSR* – the Union of Artists of the USSR.

Every practising artist in the USSR worth his salt is a member of the Artists' Union, if only for some of the material advantages that accrue to membership. That being so, most, if not all, members of the teaching staff of an art institute are card-carrying members of the *Soyuz Khudozhnikov*. One immediate benefit of the union card (which is like an identity card with a passport-size photo of the member) is that it admits the bearer free to all art galleries, museums, exhibitions, etc. that normally charge admission fees. It can be said that all senior art students aspire to be full members of the Union. Although the institutes certainly do not set out to be training courses for entry to the Union, one can say that their aims are enshrined in the aims of the *Soyuz Khudozhnikov*. If the art institutes aim to train professional artists and professional artists aim to belong to the Union, it follows that the courses offered by the institutes will reflect the objectives of the union as set out in the *Ustav*.

Here is an outline of the aims and objectives as they are set out in the preamble to the *Ustav Soyuz Khudozhnikov SSSR (1977)*:

- 1 The *Soyuz Khudozhnikov SSSR* is a voluntary society or organisation of creative artists, art critics and those who actively take part in the development of the fine arts in the Soviet Union.
- 2 Under the political leadership of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, the *Soyuz Khudozhnikov* aims to organise and direct the creative work of artists and art critics to help the struggle of the Soviet People to build Communism.

- 3 The *Soyuz Khudozhnikov* aims to further the aesthetic education of the Soviet people.
- 4 The *Soyuz Khudozhnikov* aims to advance the tradition of Russian classical art, the art of the People of Russia (folk art) and world artistic culture. On the foundation of Marxism–Leninism, the Union affirms the method of Socialist Realism in the creative activities of Soviet artists.
- 5 Socialist Realism is a higher stage in the historical development of world art. Socialist Realism ensures truthfulness and the concrete portrayal of reality in its revolutionary development.
- 6 Issuing from the method of Socialist Realism, the foundation of Lenin's principles of the Party and peoples' art, the Union aims to promote comprehensive development of creative individuality, to bring out any special talent, to assist the achievement of the wealth and variety of artistic styles, to maintain broad initiative and innovation in the struggle for communist ideological content and to foster consummate skill and craftsmanship in the multi-national Soviet fine arts.
- 7 To implement and fulfil its international duty, the Union of Soviet Artists takes an active part in bringing together in conferences friendly foreign public and social organisations and affirms the struggle for peace and democratic and social progress (Anikst, p. 3).

Some idea of how those aims are put into practice in the art institutes may be derived from a publication of the *Moskovskoe Vyshee Khudozhestvenno-Promyshlennoe Uchilische* – the Moscow High Industrial Art College – or MVKhPU, as it is sometimes called, though perhaps more often it is referred to by its former name of the Strogonovsky Institute. It claims to be one of the oldest educational establishments in the country, having trained artists for industry, architecture and construction for more than 100 years. Today it is concerned with training industrial designers for machine building, machine tool construction and railway, motor and water transport. It is also training designers of consumer goods, packaging and advertising, interior design, furniture and glass, decorative fabrics, etc. The College also produces graduates in mural paintings, sculpture and a wide variety of applied art from weaving to ceramics, and also sponsors the creation of artistic works in wood, metal and plastic.

The preface to the abovementioned publication, which has black and white illustrations of students' work from most departments, says:

. . . the applied and industrial arts of today face tasks arising out of socialist reality and therefore new requirements are asked of the College training such artists. A contemporary Soviet artist of industrial and applied arts must not only create examples of art full of ideological meaning, reflecting Soviet reality, but also help to create our environment, that is, things and objects that transform the material culture of our society. This is the characteristic feature of training students at our College. The first and main educational principle for successful fulfilment of the task is Realism, in the full and deep sense of the word in which it refers to monumental and industrial arts. Realism is the unity of beauty and usefulness-beauty, practical advantage and expediency. An object of art created in a realist manner speaks through its appearance and shape about its purpose and methods of technical execution. It is beautiful, simple and comfortable. As the great Russian architect V. Bazhenov puts it – it is beauty and usefulness combined together.

The second principle is its connection with the life around, with industry and the manner of construction. Each course-project (and all the more so, the final projects) is based on real, vital themes, on real architectural situations and reflects, not only the present-day requirements of the country, but its future needs as well.

The third principle on which the whole work of training young artists is based is collectivism. The work in a collective is the main factor in the upbringing and training of Soviet specialists, including artists. A contemporary Soviet artist occupied in industry or in the construction work has to overcome individualism and subjectivism, has to be able to consider his creative activities as part of a great collective process, to look upon himself as a member of a big creative body and to work in a general rhythm (Khrustal'eva, n.p.).

Stripped of its jargon, most of the above quotation sounds very much like the familiar principles of fitness for purpose, respect for materials and acceptance of the process of manufacture, whether by hand-tools or machine. All designers hope to combine beauty and utility and, whether we like it or not, whether we consciously intend it or not, the resulting artifact will in some degree reflect the society in which it is created. Good designers always think, when designing something, of the people who will use it, of the way in which they will use it and in what circumstances. They will also give just regard to the process of production, the methods and customs of handling, packaging and distribution. Good design grows out of the life of the

users and the methods of manufacture. In other words, we can agree with nearly all of the principles and their application as quoted above, although some of the words give us a pause for thought. Some of the difficulty may be due to translation. The quotation is taken direct from the MVKhPU publication in its own English translation, which, to my ear, is sometimes awkward. Words acquire special associations and have a significance in one language or country that cannot readily be understood in another country, in another language. The word 'Realism' and the phrase 'Socialist Realism' have different associations and meanings in the USSR from what is often understood (or misunderstood) by them in the West. As I hope it is becoming clear, 'Realism' can often mean in the Soviet Union what we might call realistic acceptance of the facts of life, of the conditions and economics of industry, of the attitudes and tastes of the people.

In Britain designers are cautious of using the word 'beauty'. It can seem precious when applied to a muck-shifter or a switchboard, though we can all agree with the general principle of aiming at beauty combined with utility. Yet in life not all useful things are beautiful and not all things that are beautiful can be called useful. I think William Morris subtly made the distinction when he said, 'Have nothing in your house but what you *know* to be useful or *believe* to be beautiful'. When you speak of beauty you are in the realm of belief.

While appreciating the laudable sentiment that artists should try to create the environment in which we live, it is difficult to understand how a hair-dryer, a computer console or a concrete mixer can be 'full of ideological meaning'. They can fit their purpose, they can display admirable and logical use of materials, and they can be manufactured by the best methods of production, but it is straining the use of words to say they can be full of ideological meaning. This is, unless you say it was an ideological decision to create a concrete mixer, which helps to make homes rather than to use labour and materials on something of no easily demonstrable social use. The words 'individualism', 'subjectivism' and 'collective' in this context need discussion.

In some contexts, when it is said 'the artist has to overcome individualism and subjectivism and consider his activities as part of a collective process', it seems to mean more or less what we mean when we say the designer must think of himself as part of a team and be able to cooperate harmoniously with other members of the team and not allow his own personal whims to interfere to the detriment of the end-product. In industry there is virtually no 'individual' design. Even though sometimes a man's name may be attached to a product, there

needs to be so much consultation, there needs to be so much advice taken on technical and other matters, that the end-product is really the result of the considered opinions of a number of people who collectively condition the design. That is not to say that some gifted individual with a grasp of the technical, aesthetic and social aspects may not make such inspired use of his advisers that he is entitled to have his name associated with the product. But a finished article in the shop is the result of a long line of people's efforts. One man alone cannot produce the goods.

The exception is, of course, the artist-craftsman whose productions are of necessity 'one-off'. But it is true that the artist-designer (as distinct from the artist-craftsman) is a member of a team in which his own individualism is conditioned by the individualism of others. This seems to me to apply the world over. We jib at the associations which have become attached to the words 'collective' individualism and subjectivism without recognising their intended meaning.

The preamble to the MVKhPU (Strogonov) publication goes on to say, 'This College attaches great importance to the problem of synthesis of art'. This means the collaboration of many special departments, such as decorative, applied and industrial art. It says further:

. . . the synthesis of arts is not a simple sum – it lends completeness and perfectness to architecture and the possibility of expressing the ideas and national aspirations of the people . . . Realism, vitality and collectivism, bold seeking for new means of artistic expression – these are the characteristic features of creative work of young Soviet artist. Our task is to lead the youth and help them to create great works of art – art which is strong and effective and able to form class consciousness of the people, which calls for new great achievements.

It is laudable that teachers have the desire to encourage young people to create works of art. But great talent is not present in all students. The most a teacher can do is to try and bring out the best that is within the student. As many of us believe in Britain, the teacher *brings out* what is latent in the student; he does not *force in* ideas that may not be relevant to the stage of development of the student's persona. In an art school the aim is not so much the acquisition of facts as the cultivation of a faculty. This seems to be well understood and practised by the members of staff of the Soviet art institutes that I have met over the past eleven years or so.

When we consider the pictorial arts as distinct from the applied arts,

there is greater opportunity for the inclusion of ideological meaning. This can occur not only in easel painting, drawings, lithographs or wood-engravings, but also in murals, tapestries, mosaics, sculpture, metal reliefs or ceramic panels on or in buildings. These are to be seen more frequently in the USSR than in the UK. Large tapestries, batik curtains, mosaics and metallic or ceramic reliefs adorn schools, colleges, factories, hotels, railways stations and blocks of apartments. There is such a demand for these embellishments to buildings that the major art institutes have a department of monumental art, which may include frescoes and even stained glass. (I saw some very interesting stained-glass work by students on my last visit to the Surikov Institute in 1982.)

Tapestry (gobelin, as they call it in the USSR), both pictorial and decorative, is of a high standard at the Strogonov in Moscow, the Mukhina in Leningrad and the Academy in Tbilisi. Batik curtains are a feature in many a restaurant, school and *Dvorets Kultury*, and the skill for their making was gained in the art institutes.

But, before dealing with the content of courses at art institutes, a little more needs to be said about Socialist Realism. This is a term that brings to the minds of many people in the West large muscular women holding sheaves of corn or driving tractors. Such subjects may have been popular (at least they were produced) in the 1920s and 1930s but will rarely be seen in art galleries or other public places in the 1980s. What you will see will be scenes on state farms, pictures of construction work, whether on *BAM* or on blocks of flats. You will see pictures of young women at work in an office, a bookshop or a flower shop. You will see weddings or a new baby being viewed by the family and relations, as in a traditional christening party. You will see young ladies gossiping as they wheel their prams in the park; you will see young men in the mountains resting at a summit to admire the view. There will be the occasional scene in a factory, in a timber yard or in a forest where trees are being felled. There will be scenes from everyday life that anybody can understand. As elsewhere, artists wish to record the life around them, they wish to depict industrial development on which everybody's life depends. But many artists, perhaps one could say *most* artists, in the USSR still like to represent the things that have always been thought to be beautiful and fitting subjects for art. By this I mean flowers, landscapes, old buildings, children, mothers and old people: indeed, the seasons of human life as well as the seasons of nature.

A large exhibition at, say, the *Manege* in Moscow or Leningrad will

have a high proportion of flower-pieces and landscapes symbolic of spring, summer, autumn or winter. There will be landscapes with the domes of an old church as a focal point, a tree in bloom or being battered by the wind, a clearing in the woods with people picknicking. There will also be plenty of portraits – not always of important or famous people – but portraits of ‘My Wife’, ‘My Father’ or ‘Daughter at the Piano’, portraits of people close to the artist’s private life. Sometimes satire breaks through and I remember a series in Leningrad, particularly one imaginary portrait called ‘Bureaucratov Bureaucratovitch’ – a puffy red face with cold evasive eyes.

Portraiture is an important subject in all art institutes, with a very high standard reached at the Repin Institute in Leningrad and the Surikov Institute in Moscow. At the Surikov I saw students making drawings first of a skull, then from a plaster cast of a head showing its muscles, that is, showing all the ‘forms’ immediately under the skin that affect the head’s external shape. This brought back memories of my own student days when we drew skulls and pelvises and whole skeletons and later added the muscles by studying books of anatomy. We also drew plaster casts of heads (I remember drawing Voltaire and a sweet, serenely beautiful head of a young woman said to be a death-mask of a suicide in the Seine) and anatomical plaster casts showing the muscles. At the Surikov students were doing this very thing in the same room as a model was posed, so that the drawings of the skull and the plaster cast of the muscles were directly relevant to the head of the model. The completed drawings could then be laid side by side with the skull, the muscles and the head of the living model in the same relative position.

It is evident in the institutes and art galleries that still life still lives. Early in the course at the Surikov every student makes a lino-cut of a still life. (This fascination with still life can be seen even in film-makers, particularly in the work of Tarkovskii, where the camera lingers on table-tops, floors or a square metre of a stream, dwelling on stones and submerged bottles.) For centuries, making drawings and paintings of objects on a table-top – plates, jugs, vases, fruits – from Chardin’s loaves and copper pots to Cezanne’s apples and pears, has been regarded as a good way of learning to relate objects in space and to depict the light and shade, because they can be controlled in a way that is impossible out of doors. It is also regarded as a sound way to study colour for the same reason. Out of doors, colour can change with every passing cloud. It can change between one looking at an object, looking down at the palette and back again. Still life is also an exercise

in composition and so earns a respected place in the curriculum of Soviet art institutes. Just as we can see students in the Victoria and Albert Museum making drawings in the galleries (one reason why the original Royal College of Art was built in South Kensington was its easy access to the V & A by its own door direct from the studios), so we can see art students in the museums of the cities of the USSR making studies. Copying in the traditional manner can still be seen in London's National and Tate Galleries, and in the USSR copying is regarded as a useful experience in training to master the technique of painting and as a background to realism. At the Tashkent Institute I was shown students' copies of admired paintings with evident relish by the tutor.

The historical element in the Surikov's paintings has a real appeal; the sheer joy in nature of Levitan's landscapes and the passionate imagination of Vrubel are good reasons for the study and even the copying of those painters. It was well understood that copying was only a means to an end and did not occupy an unduly large space in the curriculum, though I was a little surprised to be told at one institute that two summer months were spent copying in the museums. On the other hand, I was also told that, from the first to the fourth year of the course, open-air painting was the main activity during June and July.

Generally speaking, it would be true to say that the subject matter of drawing and painting in the Soviet art institutes is the environment in a broad sense. Artists have a desire to reflect the life around them. But a few artists (and art students) also desire to depict the life of the founding fathers of their society. It is not a new idea to compare the growth of communism with the spread of Christianity, but with the big difference that the Soviet version of Marxism–Leninism became an influence on world thought while some of its progenitors were still alive, or were known to people who *are* still alive. Some of these personalities are regarded with a respect amounting to reverence not unlike that accorded to the saints who lived centuries *after* Christ and centuries *before* the artists who depicted them in pictures.

There is something of the spirit of the saints in their dedication, in their singleness of purpose, in their willingness to suffer for their beliefs. They believed in what they fought for with a fervour that can only be called faith. I am aware that such a comparison might be objectionable to a convinced Christian and the use of the word 'faith' is likely to be unacceptable to a persuaded communist, who believes in science. But, in my opinion, some of those who set out to build a new society, whether you agree with them or not, did so with a fanatical

conviction comparable to that of those who have founded other ways of thinking that affect people's lives as a whole.

Today the fanatical faith of the founding fathers seems to me to have cooled somewhat, but the idea of building a new society is sincerely held by a sufficiently large number of people for some of them to wish to depict the lives of those who have contributed conspicuously to that end. But scenes from the life of Lenin and Gorky are perhaps less frequent now and pictures of evident material progress provide inspiration for more achievement. Building dams, penetrating virgin forests at frighteningly low temperatures, finding ways of growing more food, sportsmen in action, actors and actresses at work or rest are subjects that are popular and readily understandable. People can take a vicarious pride in pictures of cosmonauts. This is an obvious form of Social Realism and the art institutes show evidence of such subject matter. What surprises me is not how much there is but how little.

At some point in their course, students are expected to produce a 'political' work. This can take the form of an anti-pollution poster, an anti-drunkenness poster, a composition reflecting the achievements since the Revolution or a composition depicting heroic resistance during the Second World War. As the Russians lost 20 000 000 people during the War, scarcely a family is without its loss, and people still remember the tragedy keenly enough to find war pictures acceptable. Young people are reminded at school of the suffering and heroism of their parents' and grandparents' generations. Every war produces its heroes and every youth admires a hero, so why not express the admiration in paint?

It seems to me that economic considerations are an important influence on maintaining the flow of pictures of the founding fathers, of great incidents in the Revolution, of the establishment of great enterprises, of bravery in battle or of productive activity on state farms. It is a question of supply and demand and there is a demand for such pictures. The chief patrons of the visual arts are the ministries or other public bodies. It is they who buy or commission such pictures. If a printing or a mosaic or whatever is required for a particular site, the conditions of employment might vary according to status. An eminent artist may choose his own subject. Sometimes the ministry asks the artist what he would like to paint but may require to see a sketch before giving him the go-ahead. On another occasion the ministry may commission a work on a certain topic and choose the artist they think will best fulfil the task. Commissions from the ministries naturally support or encourage official beliefs, just as the Church commissions

images to maintain its faith, not to undermine it. The same applies if capitalism is the patron. It is the interaction of demand and supply which, at least partly, explains the dearth of abstract work. Many artists have told me they *can* do abstract work if they wish and exhibit it from time to time. One artist said quite categorically it is *necessary* to experiment with pure forms. Yet the market for abstract work at present is small and unlikely to grow much, if at all. But who knows?

The term 'abstract' is ill-defined in use. Many works in and on buildings in the USSR have little or no representational content and so, using one vocabulary, might be called 'abstract'; using another vocabulary, they might be called decorative. The borderline between 'abstract' and 'decorative' is blurred. The quality of art cannot be judged by its degree of abstraction. Artists tend to produce what their instincts dictate or temperament and upbringing inspire but they are not immune from economic as well as social and artistic pressures. In the long run, they produce what there is a need for. Admittedly some artists have been, and are, prepared to suffer if their ambitions are out of step with society but, by and large, artists supply what is demanded of them or what there is a market for.

The Church in the past dictated what the artist should do but it did not prevent great artists from producing great works. How many great artists emerge from the Soviet sphere remains to be seen. Religious subjects are rare but not unknown. At the Surikov Institute students were producing colour lino-cuts of famous paintings, including icons, with remarkable feeling. In the final diploma year I saw colour lino-cuts of Mayakovsky. A professor at another major art institute painted a beautiful Annunciation and Crucifixion, not, as one might expect, in the manner of traditional icons, but in soft pastel shades of pink and blue, and indubitably in the manner of the twentieth century.

The styles of painting, as distinct from subject matter, to be seen in the art institutes and galleries have their roots in the styles that swept Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Surrealism, Expressionism and most of the other isms – but they have developed differently in Russia. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, there have been two conflicting, but intermingling, schools of thought whose adherents were labelled Slavophiles and Westernisers. The question was whether Russia should follow where Peter the Great led and embrace Western ways of thinking and Western literature and art or whether she should go back to her own roots, and, through folk arts, develop an indigenous Russian art of her own.

It is natural for all peoples who, by Western standards, have been regarded as 'backward' to fear being swamped. Former British colonies, including America, went through a period of struggle to throw off some of the cultural ties with Europe and to create a culture of their own; and what is (oddly) called the Third World has a similar fear of being overwhelmed by the impact of alien cultures, though it needs new technology. Think, for example, of what might result from the introduction of an alphabet to the millions of illiterate people in Africa. The first question is 'Which alphabet?' There are three major alphabets: (1) Latin, (2) Cyrillic, and (3) Arabic (Chinese is not alphabetic). If the Latin alphabet is used for a language without a written form, it is likely to bring with it a Christian ethic and European or American attitudes. If Cyrillic is used, it is almost bound to bring with it ideas of communism and Slavonic customs. If Arabic is used, it would be hard to avoid the influence of Islam and the literature and life-style of the Arabs.

In the USSR ordinary people are no longer as backward as they were in the nineteenth century but the nineteenth-century dichotomy of how far to swim in the mainstream of Europe or how far to pursue a course of their own is still there beneath, if not on, the surface. The Soviets obviously need Western technology and they must follow where they cannot lead, as lead they can in some things. But art does not lend itself to practical or scientific evaluation. There still is a conscious desire on the part of the authorities not only to create a Soviet art, as is clear from the *Ustav Soyuza Khudozhnikov*, but also to develop, or at least to preserve, the national arts of the republics and the smaller ethnic groups.

Remember the *Peredvizhniki* (1870–1923) and the efforts of Mamantov at Abramtsevo. Mamantov has been appropriately described by a Russian friend of mine as 'The Lorenzo the Magnificent of Russia' for his inspired patronage of the arts. The *Peredvizhniki* (The Itinerants) reacted against the conventional, antiquated and moribund system of the Academy in Leningrad, which had a three-year course of drawing from prints and plaster casts of classical sculpture. In 1863 fourteen undergraduates led by Ivan Kramskoi applied to the Council of the Academy to replace the set diploma assignment by themes of their own choice more suited to each individual's own temperament and inclinations. Their protest is now known in the history of art as 'The Rebellion of the Fourteen'. It was considered by the authorities to be subversive and the fourteen were

put under police surveillance. In spite of that they formed themselves into a kind of commune – the St Petersburg Artel (Association) of Artists. With Kramskoi's guidance, they tried to present a realistic picture of normal life in Russia and of the natural scenery of the countryside, which at the time was generally depicted in a classically idealised style. The Artel was the first democratic association of artists to oppose the Imperial Academy of Arts.

By 1870 the Society for Circulating Art Exhibitions (The Itinerants) had been formed, independent of the Academy of Arts. After the first exhibition in St Petersburg, they held exhibitions in Moscow, Kiev, Kharkov, Odessa, Astrakhan and many other cities, which were thus able to enjoy the work of most of the major artists of the period, notably Ivan Kramskoi, Vasily Perov, Alexei Savrasov, Ilya Repin, Vasily Surikov, Ivan Shishkin, Arkhip Kuinji, Valentine Serov, Isaac Levitan and many others. Fine painters all, and it must be said in passing that nineteenth-century Russia was as rich in painters and visual artists as it was in novelists and playwrights. You will notice that two of those painters, Repin and Surikov, are honoured by having their names attached to the two fine art institutes, one in Leningrad (Repin) and one in Moscow (Surikov). The Mukhina Institute in Leningrad is named after Vera Mukhina, a post-revolutionary sculptress.

The work of Surikov and Repin is still an influence on students, but Levitan and Vrubel have great appeal and the Ukrainian Kuinji has his admirers.

So the present-day student of painting has his roots in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century realistic art and draws little nourishment from the artists we are more familiar with in the West, such as Tatlin, Rodchenko, El Lissitzky (except for graphic design) and Malevich. Nevertheless, I sometimes think I can see traces of Mondrian and Chagall and Paul Klee, and in the applied arts institutes young students carry out exercises in cut white card that we associate with the Bauhaus, which in turn got many of its ideas from Russia.

In the absence of illustrations, which is such a great handicap in dealing with the visual arts, one has to make do with words to describe the variety of styles to be seen in the institutes and galleries. I had expected to see a certain uniformity of style but my expectations were thwarted. Even in drawing from life there is great variety. At one end of the scale, there are painstakingly shaded drawings which reminded me of old 'stump' drawings. At the other end

of the scale (and most were towards this end), there are free, lively, and 'sketchy' drawings. Vigour of execution is much admired. The standard of drawing on the whole is high.

As to painting technique, this ranges from thick, lustily applied impasto to thin delicate glazes. In a large exhibition at, say, the *Manege* in Moscow, almost as many ways of applying paint can be seen as there are paintings. Whatever the subject matter, some artists approach the canvas with evident pleasure for the physical feel of the paint and one can say that a major part of the total effect is in the paint itself. Other artists seem to use the art to disguise art, the technique being subservient to form. The subject, the form and the colour appear more important than the manner of painting, and then one realises how well painted the forms are. Sometimes, particularly among the water colours, the competence of the handling verged on slickness.

But art is not only painting. At the exhibitions I have been referring to, called *Molodost' Strany* (literally 'Youth of the Country'), presenting the work of those under thirty-five years of age, which is art institute age, it is normal to exhibit not only paintings and sculpture but also glassware, ceramics, tapestries, jewellery, bookbinding and stage decor – the whole range of arts and crafts taught in the colleges. Tapestries and other hangings are of considerable originality in conception, subtle in colour and carried out with impeccable technique.

Art education in the primary and secondary schools in the USSR, in the kindergartens and the ten-year schools, does not exist as we know it in Britain. That does not mean that potential artists do not have an opportunity to develop their latent talent. On the contrary, any child with interest in and talent for the visual arts is given every encouragement. The visual arts in general education are regarded as extra-curricular studies and so the practice of arts and crafts usually takes place at the pioneer palaces and at the Komsomol, etc., rather than as a timetabled subject. It is rare when visiting ten-year schools to find children's paintings on the walls. On the other hand, there are art galleries devoted solely to the display of children's art and major galleries which normally exhibit adult art may be given over to exhibitions of children's art from time to time. Any youngster who shows any promise is quickly put in touch with the art institute and, if suitable, is given full-time art education when he reaches the age of seventeen, the lowest age of admission to the art institute. The highest age of admission is thirty-five.

Admission procedures are much the same at all art institutes, but the

one outlined below is that followed at the Moscow Polygraphical Institute, as explained to me by a recent graduate of that establishment. There were twenty-five to thirty applicants for every place available.

Admission is initially by interview. A member of staff sees the applicant with his or her portfolio of work. If approved, the candidate may then take the entrance examination. This consists of two parts:

*Part One* – Painting, drawing, composition with lettering, illustration.

Eight hours are allowed for each subject.

*Part Two* – Russian literature (four hours) plus an essay in the Russian language. Students from the autonomous republics will regard Russian as a foreign language. Part of the examination is oral, where motivation and attitude can be assessed.

Special arrangements are made for students from the republics to improve their Russian language. The same applies to other foreigners, from such countries as Vietnam, India, Sri Lanka, etc.

The course takes a minimum of five years. I was told that the ministry is considering extending the course to six years, as it is usual for the whole of the last academic year to be spent on the Diploma Project. I understand that at the Surikov Institute the course is already six years. Students work on Saturday and can have forty-six hours a week of timetabled study. This includes four hours a week of physical education (sport).

It is normal for students to spend part of the first or last semester of the academic year on a state or collective farm. One member of staff described it to me as ‘They go to pick potatoes’. It may not always be potatoes they pick – in the south it may be peaches – but at least they help with the harvest and learn something of the foundations of their society.

As the Moscow Polygraphical Institute is mainly concerned with the graphic arts, it puts a greater emphasis on applied techniques, such as printing, letterpress and litho, poster design, book design and production, than, say, the Surikov Institute, where the emphasis is more on what we call ‘fine art’. The Surikov is approximately comparable to London’s Slade School or Academy Schools, whereas the Stroganov is more like London’s Central School of Art and Design or The Royal College of Art.

Illustration is a skill having much in common with fine art. Representational drawing of a high standard is required not only of the

human figure but of landscape and architecture. But as illustrations are usually reproduced in books and magazines, they must harmonise with typefaces and must be capable of reproduction and satisfactory printing by the process stipulated. Therefore, a knowledge of printing techniques is essential. All this means that a substantial amount of a student's time is spent in what in our jargon is called 'complementary studies'.

Some time in the first six months of the first year (it was not clear how many hours per week) is spent in the study of world literature. Most students learn something of the great writers, not only of Russia but of most European countries and America too.

All students study a foreign language of their choice for four years, although the choice is usually limited to English, French or German. The history of communism and economics occupy four hours per week, rising to six or eight hours per week in the third and fourth year. These classes include discussions, and I was told that when a student says, 'I don't agree with that', the tutor says, 'That is how it used to be – not now!' That may well be true – attitudes and beliefs are changing. Philosophy is studied for two hours per week.

During the first year twelve hours a week are spent on drawing and painting. General history of art takes four hours per week and continues for four years. History of book art includes the history of costume and furniture, etc., and takes two hours per week. In the first year, students are also introduced to the technology of the graphic arts and the process of book production. These subjects consist mainly of lectures and demonstrations and occasional visits to factories.

In the second year the history of the party takes up two hours per week, drawing and painting twelve hours per week, and lectures on the organisation of printing and book design two hours, plus four hours practical work on book design. There is also a weekly two-hour lecture on the art of lettering, where work done at home is discussed.

Special projects, which are assigned, may comprise the design of a whole book. This may take six months working at home. Projects where the student works at home continue throughout the third and fourth years. So do complementary studies. In the fourth year those who wish to become illustrators have four hours per week on the history of illustrations and the economics of book production. Those who intend to concentrate on poster design or packaging study the history and economics of their art.

Work in the fifth (diploma) year is divided into two main parts:

*Part One* – The student may choose a book to plan and design in its entirety. He must produce not less than six illustrations (though he may do twenty if he wishes and can find the time and energy). He must design the jacket, title-page, text pages, binding, etc. He may employ lithography or etching, xylography or photography, for the illustrations. Every student must give a written explanation of why he did what he did and give full instructions to the printer to carry out the work. Photography is only taught at the Polygraphical Institute and the Faculty of Journalism at Moscow University, where it is optional. No art institute is equipped with studios, darkrooms, enlargers, cameras, etc. on the scale that is now quite common in Britain. It is not easy in Russia for anybody to reach a high standard in photography at home. I was told that there is a shortage of film. It was also whispered to me that there is still, in academic circles, the belief that photography is not an art and a rival to painting. I remember that attitude well enough in Britain – and not so long ago at that. Now, however, in the West photography is accepted as an art.

*Part Two* – The student must produce a series of drawings on one theme or, if he wishes, a series of posters or packages. A student is permitted to change his chosen subject, that is, he may change from illustration to posters or packaging.

All art institutes operate on broadly similar lines but with different emphasis according to subject. As has already been said, the Surikov is ‘fine art’ orientated, and so projects and complementary studies will differ.

General subjects at the Surikov include history, anatomy and languages for about four hours per week. These general subjects occupy more of a student’s time in the first year and gradually diminish up to the last year. A student may do as much as thirty hours a week drawing. As a result, the standard of drawing at the Surikov is high.

The staff said their aim and purpose is expression and also to help society. Students are given a grounding in traditional draughtsmanship and any experiment is towards realism. Abstract art is not taught but one tutor thought it necessary to experiment with pure forms.

The Repin Institute in Leningrad, which used to be the Academy of Arts in Tsarist days and is still housed in the handsome building on the bank of the Neva, is very similar in aim to the Surikov in Moscow. Its emphasis is on fine art, i.e. painting, sculpture and related subjects

such as illustration. It also has a flourishing department of architecture.

Some of the major art institutes also have a kind of 'external' course, whereby students work at home and bring work to the college at quite long intervals for criticism. At the Repin Institute, with 900 full-time day students, there are 400 of these 'correspondence' students. It means that people in jobs or who, for one reason or another, cannot take up a full-time course, are able to get the benefit of professional advice and encouragement. It is one of the aims of both the institutes and the Artists' Union to encourage talent in the visual arts wherever it appears and at almost any age.

## STUDENT GRANTS OR STIPENDS

The basic grant for a student in an art institute is 45 roubles per month, but there are other sources of income. For example, there is a Lenin Stipend of 100 roubles, a Surikov Stipend of 75 roubles and other special awards. During vacations students may be given paid work. As with university students, stipends after the first year may be increased if the student works hard and does well in examinations. I asked a senior student, a recent graduate, if he thought this fair. His reply was prompt and emphatic, 'Certainly', he said, 'why should a student who wastes his time get as much money as one who works hard?' All materials are supplied free.

At the end of the course, after graduation, the State Commission offers jobs and students can be sent anywhere for three years. As one tutor said, graduates may be sent to Alma Ata, Vladivostok or to any place they are needed. The jobs they are given may be as assistants in museums (art galleries are usually called museums in the USSR), as teachers in schools, as designers attached to a factory, as publishers or any job where artistic or craft skills are an asset. Some, I think the best, are allowed to stay and work in Moscow, Leningrad or the place of their choice. I got the feeling from the staff in the Moscow institutes that they would do their best to find work of the most talented students in Moscow. I found a similar local loyalty in other big cities, but for some provincial students Moscow and Leningrad still have a great attraction, just as London draws many art students in Britain from their native countries.

There is a steady influx of people into the big cities but it is still possible for the most successful painters to spend a considerable

amount of their time in the country, if they wish. They can stay at the *Dom Khudozhnikov*, run by the Artists' Union, free of charge for a month or so, or they may rent a dacha at about 500 roubles for the summer. It is also possible to own a dacha.

Membership of the *Soyuz Khudozhnikov SSSR* brings with it both responsibilities and material advantages. It is one of the Union's duties to help members with finding housing and place of work. One artist said that a studio is a 'perk' of membership. The rent of a studio may be as little as six roubles a month, including lighting and heating. In large cities (I have Leningrad in mind) a studio could be one room in an old building, but it could also be a purpose-built studio. These can be large, high and on the ground floor for sculptors, whose work can be large and heavy or for painters whose work may also be big. On the floors above are smaller studios for illustrators, graphic designers, etchers and lithographers, who need a press and other equipment. Sometimes there are living quarters on the upper floors. I have visited such blocks of studios in Moscow, Kiev, Leningrad and Tashkent.

The Union helps with the supply of paints, brushes and other materials. It has holiday or rest homes on the Baltic coast, in the Crimea, in the Caucasus and in the woods and lakes near Moscow. Here an artist may stay for a month or more at a time with free board and lodging and sometimes a special pass to travel on the railway to and from his or her home. I know a number of artists personally who take advantage of this privilege.

The Union also provides a kind of shop window by organising exhibitions in the city *Dom Khudozhnikov*, which usually also houses the regional office of the Union as well as exhibition rooms. The Union is also pledged to work for the cultural, domestic and material conditions of members and securing and safeguarding artists' rights.

The Union administers an art fund of 2 000 000 roubles, given by the government, and may obtain grants from other state organisations. This helps to provide work, studios, equipment, paints, canvas and all art materials.

The Union has the right to own property but is exempt from state and local taxes. It acts as a kind of agent between artists and clients and reaps financial benefits from the enterprises it organises. The Union is organised in a kind of pyramid, with its apex in Moscow. If more than ten artists live in any region or district, they may organise themselves into a branch union if they so desire. If there are less than ten members, they must attach themselves to the nearest principal territory. So there are unions in districts, regions, cities, republics and,

at the apex, in Moscow, where the Union for the whole of the USSR is situated. The larger unions have the right to acquire, gain, buy and own property and to conclude all kinds of agreements, contracts and treaties appropriate to their aims, and to retain any monies that may result from the undertakings, enterprises, businesses and exhibitions they may have arranged. They have the right to set up houses of artists (*Domy Khudozhnikov*), houses of creativity (*Domy Tvorchestva*), houses of rest, sanatoria, medical institutions, studios, laboratories, libraries and shops, and to publish journals. Each union is independent and self-supporting through its own secretariat and board of directors.

Anybody, whether he has been to an art institute or not, may apply for membership of the Union. He must first join the *Molodezhnii Sektor* of the local union and remain there for two years. Entry is by submitting specimens of work, and it must be supported by three members who can vouch for the candidate's creative and social character before a committee of practising artists. The artist who first told me about this procedure insisted, without being asked, that the selection committee was composed only of artists, not administrators. After two years the artist may apply to join the Union proper and obtain the cherished Union card.

Candidate members must demonstrate that they have been practising artists during that time by participating in exhibitions or carrying out commissions and by setting up an exhibition of their two-years' work, to be seen by the selection committee. If approved, they may later, if they wish, apply by a similar procedure to become full members of the Union in Moscow. If the candidate is from a distant province or republic, photographs of work in a uniform size may be sent to support the application. I have myself taken photographs of friends' work to be sent to Moscow for this purpose.

To give some idea of the remuneration a student may look forward to after graduating, it is useful to consider the fees paid to painters, etchers, engravers and illustrators, etc., at the exhibitions organised by the Union. The fees are decided by the Union but are negotiable. If the fee proposed by the Union (which is composed of fellow artists) is considered by the artist to be too low, he may negotiate until agreement is reached. The state normally has first pick of an artist's exhibition. The 'state' may be in the person of a local official who needs a picture for the city administrative offices, a *Dvorets Kultury* or another public place, or it may be in the person of a representative from the Ministry of Culture, who may buy the work for a museum, art gallery, library or college, rather like the Arts Council or other buying bodies in Britain selecting work for presentation in galleries. When the

representative of the state has decided what he wants (or does not want), the remainder of the exhibition may be sold for what the artist can get.

Legally, the fees are authorised by the Ministry of Culture but in practice this is done on the advice of the Artists' Union. Here are some typical fees. These figures were given to me in the first place by two artist friends but I have verified them with other artists in Leningrad, Moscow and Kiev.

A large oil painting can fetch 5000 roubles or more, while a small landscape can fetch 700 roubles. Water colours average about 400 roubles but can rise to 700 or 800 roubles. Etchings can cost 700 roubles. Under some circumstances, etchings may be paid for partly by size at 3 roubles per square centimetre and wood-engravings or wood-cuts at 1 to 2 roubles per square centimetre. Book illustrations fetch 80 to 200 roubles, according to size and importance.

Another way of remunerating artists is by a monthly salary of 250 roubles or a sum appropriate to status. Twice a year the artist must show what he has produced. In addition to the monthly salary, an artist may sell his work and keep the proceeds.

This paper is based on about forty visits to the Soviet Union over the last eleven years or so. On most of these visits I have talked with artists and staff in their respective institutions (and, in some cases, in their homes and studios), and looked at classrooms, studios, lecture rooms and equipment, etc. Where it has not been convenient to visit buildings, I have nevertheless discussed art education and the position of the artist with those who teach in the art institutes and with artists who do not teach regularly.

The Higher Art Institutes include:

*Moscow* The Surikov (mainly fine arts), named after Vasily Surikov, painter (1848–1916); MVKhPU or the Stroganov (mainly industrial and applied arts); and the Polygraphical Institute (arts and crafts related to printing).

*Leningrad* The Repin Institute, formerly the Academy of Arts (mainly fine arts), named after Ilya Repin, painter (1844–1930); LVKhPU or the Mukhina Applied Arts Institute (industrial design, textiles, ceramics, glass, posters etc.), named after Vera Mukhina, a post-revolutionary sculptor.

*Tashkent* The Higher Institute for Art, Theatre and Cinema.

*Kiev* Research Institute for Graphic Arts and Printing.

*Tbilisi* The Academy of Arts (mainly fine arts but excellent theatrical design, tapestries, illustrations, etc.).

I have also talked with artists in their homes or studios in Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev, Tbilisi, Yerevan, Tallinn and Tashkent. Much of my knowledge and understanding of Soviet art has been gleaned from regular visits to the *Dom Khudozhnikov* in Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev, Riga, Tallinn and Tashkent. In Leningrad there are two buildings where exhibitions of young people's art may be seen, that is, where work is exhibited by those under 35 years of age, who may well still be at the institutes. In Moscow I have visited three, and in Leningrad two, such places. I have also made many visits to the major state art galleries, such as the Russian Museum and the *Manege* in Leningrad; the Tretyakov, the New Tretyakov and the *Manege* in Moscow; the National Gallery in Tashkent; the National Gallery in Riga; the City Art Gallery in Pskov; the Ukrainian Art Gallery and the Gallery of Russian Art in Kiev; the National Art Gallery in Baku; the National Gallery and others in Tbilisi; the City Art Gallery in Irkutsk, the Gallery of Contemporary Art in Yerevan; and exhibitions in other places. It seems to me to be necessary to absorb the feeling of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Russian art in order to judge the nature and relevance of the instruction given in the art institutes. I have also looked at kindergartens and ten-year schools in Leningrad, Moscow and Kiev, and at an interesting school associated with a large state farm at Meerny, about 50 km south of Kiev.

For those who like to be given some names, I asked a number of artists whose opinion I respect who they regarded as the top twenty artists in the Soviet Union today. In random order, here are those they agreed upon: V. Popkov, D. Zhilinsky, E. E. Moiseenko, I. A. Zavin, V. Brainin, D. Shmarinov, L. R. Tegin, B. Ugarov, T. Nazarenko, V. Plastov, I. V. Sorokin, E. Gragobskii, E. Zverkov, Ch. Akhmarov, D. Oboznenko, L. Tsutskiridze, M. Avetisyan, V. Kandelaki, O. Komov, U. Chernov, T. Salakhov, A. Pologova, T. Nasipova, E. Arshakooni, L. Milova and B. F. Jalaov. Other artists would no doubt suggest additional names and remove some from the list, but all are of sufficient importance for colleagues to put their names forward as the top twenty or so. A few significant graphic artists, i.e. engravers, etchers, lithographers and illustrators, working today are: D. Bisty, G. F. Zakharov, G. Tseretelli, U. L. Konnov, F. D. Konstantinov, A. E. Golyakovskaya, U. I. Kosminin, Vive Tolli, A. L. Kalashnikov, V. Morozov, V. Frolov, V. Lopata and V. Chibanik.

My brief personal assessment of art education in the Soviet Union is that it provides sound, disciplined academic training in drawing, painting and sculpture. Though in theory experiment is encouraged, it

is encouraged only in the direction of realism, not abstraction. Students seemed to lack the frenetic and outlandish desire to be different that has beset many British art institutions for some time.

Industrial design is excellent. Based on essentials, it is not just a 'cleaning up' of old designs.

Tapestries and other wall hangings are very interesting, original and technically well executed. An exhibition of the best of these would, I think, be admired in Britain. Creative glass work is a feature worth studying and puppet-making occupies an honoured, if small, place among the subjects taught in the art institutes.

Most institutes are in old buildings, though new ones are being built (Strogonov) or planned. Compared with the British art colleges or faculties of art in polytechnics, equipment is often scarce and old, but the Russians are very resourceful and lack of the latest technology does not prevent very impressive work being produced.

On the whole, Soviet artists live well; many have cars and a dacha in the country. They are respected and, one might say, a respectable section of society.

Since writing the above I have visited more exhibitions in the USSR, during 1983, and these visits led me to think there is less and less of what we would call propaganda. For some years the proportion of propagandist works has been only a few per cent. In some exhibitions I could not find a single example of the kind that people in the West think of as typical Soviet propaganda.

I am inclined to think that people often confuse social realism with Socialist Realism. The latter can mean frankly putting forward socialist ideas just as a Christian might encourage Christian principles. The Church, while openly proselytising or making rich and opulent the places of worship, has generated great art. So the presence of propaganda is not, in itself, a quality that condemns a work as art. Art may be a vehicle for political or religious ideas, but art may also be without political implication.

Social realism can mean the representation of almost anything in nature that can make the lives of the people pleasanter. A flower-piece is social realism, a portrait is social realism, a landscape is social realism, pictures depicting the life and work of people are social realism. The proviso is that the flowers, the people, the places shown be depicted without undue distortion and in a manner acceptable to a wide range of people whose perceptions of art may vary greatly. Remember, it is one of the aims of the Artists' Union to raise the standard of aesthetic appreciation in the masses.

Different generations have different opinions as to what is realism. We have argued for years in the West as to what is realism or what is naturalism. With the general acceptance of at least some forms of abstraction, the antithesis is sometimes called 'figurative' rather than naturalistic, because some paintings, while not being in the ordinary sense realistic or naturalistic, are nevertheless clearly derived from nature. Even seemingly abstract paintings may have been derived from nature or from something seen as distinct from something imagined.

In the ten or eleven years during which I have made many visits to exhibitions of art in the USSR, there seem to me today to be more examples of near-abstract and a few frankly abstract works. Not many, but more pictures, sculptures, ceramics, wall hangings, etc., that have a decidedly abstract element than before. There is still a tendency to include, however inconspicuously, a suggestion of a figure or a flower or some other recognisable object so that a title that implies the social element can be given to the work. One might say that social realism comes close to humanism; that the artist is thinking about the effect of his work on people, perhaps artistically unsophisticated people, and is not creating only for his own satisfaction or for the admiration of his fellow artists.

But it is not a race. Abstract art is neither better nor worse than figurative art. There is *art*, which may or not be abstract. Though in the West, non-representational art is officially accepted and exhibited in all important public galleries, there are still people who get hot under the collar in protest at its display.

Talking to many artists and art teachers in the USSR, I did not experience any violent anti-modern opinions. Many said either that they did not understand it, or that such art does not appeal to them or to the public. On the other hand, some artists were keen on experimenting with pure form – certainly as an exercise to improve their artistic skill.

The standard of art seems to me to be as variable as it was under the earlier powers. The USSR is a vast multi-cultural state. The state is not one person, it is not a Medici. It operates through many individuals in many places, often far apart. Some conform readily, others reluctantly.

Some very good work is being done. The kind of work being generated and the methods of instruction in the art institutes is what I imagine Sir Joshua Reynolds would have approved of – to encourage a respect and admiration of the Old Masters, a respect for nature and a

devout study of natural phenomena, a desire to enhance the environment and to serve the human kind. The philosophy is hard to disagree with. Whether the end-product is as noble as the intentions is a matter for debate.

Those who attempt to prophesy are usually proved wrong by events. I cannot believe that in the foreseeable future there is likely to be any change in the philosophy of art and art education, but there may well be modifications in its application.

In the meantime art education in the USSR is soundly academic. It may not be approved of by many of the innovators in the West but it is much better than the system of the Petersburg Academy against which Kramskoi and the thirteen other students rebelled. Picasso started as an academic painter. Who knows what may happen in the USSR?

## SOME RUSSIAN/SOVIET ARTISTS

EL LISSITSKY (Lazar Markovich Lissitsky) (1890–1941). Studied in Darmstadt from 1909 to 1914. Trained as an engineer, he took up architecture with an architect in Moscow during the First World War. In 1917 he worked with Chagall on book illustration. When he joined Chagall at the Vitebsk School of Art, they produced books with a cubist–futurist style of illustration but containing the influence of the old Lubok popular prints. This led to some of the first examples of modern typographical design. In Vitebsk he designed *Story of Two Squares*, which was printed in 1922 and was possibly the first whole-hearted example of the New Typography. He collaborated with Mayakovsky in producing the very original book *Dlya Golosa*, sometimes translated as *For the Voice*, which was published in Berlin in 1923. There is a German facsimile, probably still available, *Für die Stimme* (Verlag Gebr. König). The layouts in this book can be regarded as valid sixty years later. The use of square-looking sans serif types is now no longer shocking. He left his mark on poster design as well as typography. El Lissitsky went so far as to credit an English book with having shown an example of New Typography, namely the Vorticist's *Blast*, but Susan P. Compton, in *The World Backwards – Russian Futurist Books 1912–16*, considers *Vladimir Mayakovsky – a Tragedy*, designed by Vladimir and David Burlyuk, as 'finally the most influential in graphic design'.

Ivan Nikolaevich KRAMSKOI (1837–87). Born in Ostragozhsk but studied at the Academy of Arts in St Petersburg. There, in 1863 he led

the so-called 'Rebellion of the Fourteen' of the students who challenged the dogmatic tradition of instruction which insisted that every student had the same diploma assignment, whereas the students thought there should be individual themes more suited to their inclinations and talents. He was an outstanding portrait painter and his sitters included Tolstoy, Nekrasov and Shishkin. But he also produced a number of significant religious pictures. As an art critic he played an important part in promoting Russian realist art.

Arkhip Ivanovich KUINJI (1842–1910). Born in Mariupol in the Ukraine, the son of a Greek shoemaker, he learned his art at the Academy of Arts in St Petersburg, where he associated with a group of artists led by Kramskoi. From 1894 to 1897 he was head of the studio of landscape painting at the Academy of Arts. His landscapes are usually dramatic, with dark, stormy skies and bright sunshine spotlighting a building through a gap in the clouds. He painted some haunting night scenes. He occupies a special place among Russian landscape painters of the second half of the nineteenth century. Repin called Kuinji 'a master of light'. He joined the Itinerants in 1875.

Isaac Ilyich LEVITAN (1861–1900). Though born in Lithuania, he studied at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, and eventually joined the Itinerants. Most people would agree that he was the most important landscape painter in Russia during the latter half of the nineteenth century. His pictures are well composed and the landscape keenly observed. Sometimes he painted freely, perhaps 'premier coup' but some of his canvases are methodically and patiently worked out. Not as great as Turner, but might be put in the same category.

Kasimir MALEVICH (1878–1935). Born near Kiev, where his father worked in a sugar factory. His mother was an affectionate, simple woman who was a close companion to Kasimir until 1929, when she died, aged 96. Malevich had little formal education but, as an avid reader, he educated himself and became a prolific writer and a speaker of charm and humour. He attended the Kiev Art School, but when he went to Moscow in 1905, he worked in the avant-garde artist Roeburg's studio until 1910. A year or two later his work may be compared to Leger's: indeed, he had reached the same point of formal construction two years before Leger. He claimed that his Suprematist system began in 1913 and was followed by the now well known 'Black

Square', 'Black Circle' and 'Black Cross'. From such paintings as 'Hay-making' and 'The Wood-cutter', where simplified human figures are easily recognisable, he developed into the Suprematist abstract style. In 1920 he was Director of the Vitebsk School of Art, following Chagall, who left in a huff because Malevich told him his work and methods were old-fashioned. After the Revolution of 1917 he virtually gave up painting but practised three-dimensional constructions he called Architectonics, and continued to write about the history of the modern movement and on the nature of art.

Savva MAMONTOV made a fortune (later to be lost) out of the railways in the 1870s. Yet he was deeply interested in the arts, and on his estate at Abramtsovo, near Moscow, he provided a meeting place for painters, architects, singers, composers, actors and writers. For some a home was provided. Gogol wrote part of *Dead Souls* there when it was owned by Aksakov. Mamontov extended the tradition by fostering a circle of painters that included Repin, Vrubel, Vasnetsov, Surikov, Serov and his family, and Pol'enov. Repin painted his famous picture 'They did not expect him' at Abramtsevo. There was a strong desire among this group of artists to revive indigenous (folk) arts and crafts and to create a truly Russian style. They built a church in the medieval manner, designed by Vasnetsov and decorated by other artists in the colony. Sunday evening readings led to mimed pageants and, finally, to complete theatrical productions. Artists-painters produced the sets, rather than the traditional artisans. This, according to Camilla Gray in *The Russian Experiment in Art* (p. 23), led to 'the idea of realistic decor . . . which directly influenced Europe'.

Vasily Gregorevich PEROV (1833–82). Born in Tobolsk and studied at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture and, years later, taught there from 1871 till 1882. The son of an impoverished nobleman, he made his name as a genre painter, though he is particularly remembered for his portraits, especially of Turgenev, Ostrovsky and Dostoevsky. Most of the images we see of Dostoevsky are based on Perov's portrait. He is regarded in Russia as an outstanding democratic artist.

Vasily Dmitrievich POLENOV (1844–1927). He was born in St Petersburg of a nobleman's family and had his first lessons in painting from Kramskoi, before studying at the Academy of Arts there between 1863 and 1871. While still studying at the Academy, he also

attended lectures in the Faculty of Law at the University. He became a member of the Itinerants and from 1882 till 1895 he taught landscape painting at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. Polenov was one of the first to be honoured with the title of People's Artist of the RSFSR. He is well known for his landscapes, portraits and historical paintings and did a lot to encourage 'plein air' painting in Russia. Much of his life was spent at Abramtsovo, where he played a key role in the setting up of the colony.

Ilya Efimovich REPIN (1844–1930). He was born at Chuguev, in the Kharkov Province, into the family of a serviceman. He studied at the Academy of Arts in St Petersburg. One of the greatest Russian painters. Flamboyant and dashing, his work ranges from impressive portraits of Tolstoy, Moussorgsky and Stasov to monumentally large historical paintings. He, too, belonged to the Itinerants (sometimes translated as The Wanderers, the name given to members of the Society for Circulating Art Exhibitions). Much reproduced paintings of his are 'The Volga Boatmen', 'They did not expect him', 'Religious Procession in Kursk Province' and the lusty 'Zaporozhe Cossacks writing a mocking Letter to the Turkish Sultan'. The old Academy School in Leningrad is now called the Repin Institute, after him.

Alexander RODCHENKO (1891–1925). Born in St Petersburg of humble parents. He attended the Kazan School of Art in Odessa but before graduating he left for Moscow to enter the Strogonov School of Applied Art, which he soon left to pursue his own geometric style of drawing. For a while he showed a vacillating attraction to Malevich's and then Tatlin's ideas. He was a pioneer of the Constructivist system of design, and from two-dimensional compositions he went on to produce three-dimensional constructions and mobiles, that is, working in 'real materials in real space'. He believed that the artist must become a technician transforming work into art and art into work. 'Art into life', he proclaimed – which statement became a slogan for the Constructivists. He painted 'Black on Black', 'Pure Red Colour', 'Pure Blue Colour' and 'Pure Yellow Colour', an affirmation of the three primary colours, which had a considerable influence. He cooperated with Mayakovsky on propaganda work and the Constructivist method of design in typography. He also designed the interior of a workers' club.

Alexei Alexandrovich SAVRASOV (1830–97). Born in Moscow, he studied at the School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture and

became head of the landscape classes there from 1857 to 1882. A fine landscape painter, he was a founder member of the Itinerants. His painting 'The Rooks are Flying' deserves its frequent reproduction. It is full of atmosphere and feeling for the Russian countryside, with church, dwelling house and great distance. The rooks herald the spring.

Valentin Alexandrovich SEROV (1865–1911). Born in St Petersburg, he received as a child instruction in drawing and painting from Repin but later he studied at the Academy of Arts. He joined the Itinerants in 1894. His father was a composer, whom he painted sympathetically, standing at his desk. He was an accomplished landscape painter but he is famous for his portraits of the great landscape painter Levitan, the actress Yermolova and the writer Maxim Gorky. He stayed frequently at Abramtsevo, and he painted Mamontov's daughter Vera in a picture known as 'Girl with Peaches', which can be regarded as a masterpiece, when he was twenty-two years of age. Mamontov treated Serov like a son. Serov and his mother had come to live at Abramtsevo early in 1874. In 1907, only four years before he died, Serov went to Greece and was very impressed by the light and the proximity to the ancient architecture. He made a great effort to achieve a grand style and painted incidents from Greek mythology. He was a great admirer of the Old Masters.

Ivan Ivanovich SHISHKIN (1832–98). He was born in the small town of Yelabuga, Viatka Province, into a merchant's family. He studied in Moscow and then in St Petersburg, at the Academy of Arts. One of the founder members of the Itinerants, he went on to become one of Russia's most famous painters, especially of landscapes. May be compared to John Constable. He is notable for very detailed paintings of trees and forest scenes. Kramskoi made a portrait of him. Very prolific, he left a rich artistic legacy of paintings, drawings, lithographs and etchings.

Vasily Ivanovich SURIKOV (1848–1916) was the son of a Cossack. He studied at the Academy in St Petersburg and later joined the Itinerants. A man of considerable talents, who was well known for landscapes and portraits, he is mainly thought of as a painter of historical subjects whose work appeals to the masses. He was a superb draughtsman and a master of composition. He is justly famous for his huge monumental pictures of 'The Boyarina Morozova' and 'The

Morning of the Execution of the streltsi'. Both pictures vividly portray the atmosphere of such occasions.

Vladimir Evgrafovich TATLIN (1885–1953). The founder of Constructivism was a pupil of Korovin (1861–1939), the radical theatrical designer and close friend of the Mamontovs. His father was Ukrainian and he was brought up in Kharkov, though his mother died when he was only two. His father married again but he disliked both his father and his stepmother. At the age of eighteen he ran away and became a sailor. When he returned, he enrolled at the Moscow College of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture but a year later he left and became a freelance painter. In 1912 an exhibition of a group known as 'The Donkey's Tail', which tried to break away from European influences and establish a truly Russian school of painting, brought together the four major figures of Larionov, Goncharova, Malevich and Tatlin. Tatlin was later invited to contribute to Mir Iskusstva exhibitions. He lived in poverty before the First World War. His Cubist tendencies remained, but his work became more three-dimensional and his reliefs incorporated tin, wood, iron and plaster. In 1927 he was appointed Director of the Ceramics Faculty of the Higher Technical Institute in Moscow. In 1915 in Petrograd there was what he called 'The Last Futurist Painting Exhibition', where Malevich first displayed his Suprematist Paintings. Tatlin objected to them and in the ensuing quarrel Malevich and Tatlin actually came to blows before the show opened. Constructivism was defined in the magazine *LEF* in 1923 as '... the organisation of the given material on the principles of tectonics (act of creation), factura (manner of creation) and construction, the form becoming defined in the process of creation, by the utilitarian aim of the object'.

Apollinarius VASNETSOV (1845–1926). Brother of Victor. Perhaps he is remembered most for his contribution to the colony at Abramtsovo. It was *his* design, based on a medieval Novgorod church, that was, after much discussion, actually erected. His brother Victor designed the mosaic floor in the form of a single spreading flower. He even helped to lay the tesserae. From personal examination of this little church I can vouch for its great charm. The interest in Russian medieval art grew and Apollinarius was attracted to pictorial reconstructions of medieval Russia, especially of Moscow. He spent the rest of his life making pictures of medieval Moscow, scholarly, yet full of colour and life.

Victor Mikhailovich VASNETSOV (1848–1926). The son of a village priest in the province of Viatka. He was a student at the Academy of Arts in St Petersburg from 1868 to 1874. Became a member of the Itinerants in 1878. Though he was an accomplished genre painter, he was most celebrated for his paintings on themes from Russian epic poems and folk-tales. Of these, the most famous and popular is 'The Bogatyri' (Russian epic heroes). Vrubel also painted a Bogatyr with rich intensity. He also took part in the development of stage design and monumental decorative painting. Together with his brother Apollinarius, he joined the colony at Abramtsovo in 1879. He became fascinated with icons and fairy tales and specialised in their representation.

Mikhail VRUBEL (1856–1910) At the St Petersburg Academy of Arts Vrubel was a pupil of Khristyakov, who also taught Repin and Surikov. Some people consider Vrubel to be greater than Repin, Surikov or Levitan, and he has been called the Russian Cezanne. Like Van Gogh he suffered from mental illness and eventually had to go to a mental hospital. He was a law graduate of the University of St Petersburg, fluent in several European languages and a keen student of philosophy. While quite young, he worked on restoring old mural paintings in the Church of St Cyril in Kiev and created others in a sympathetic style. He benefited greatly from his visits to Abramtsevo. Probably what we would now call a manic-depressive, he left a great oeuvre of intensely moving pictures, not least his portrait of Mamontov.

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# 10 Some Aspects of the Development of Special Education in the Soviet Union

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The above title has been expressed in rather general terms, as this corresponds to my intentions. My treatment of the different aspects of Soviet policy concerning special education can be explained by the fact that the project was first broached only a few months ago, in the first exchange of letters with the Chairman of the Symposium. I cannot, therefore, at this stage provide precise data to carefully document my research, nor am I able to draw far-reaching conclusions. However, I hope that discussion and exchanges with comparativists from various countries can provide substantial impetus for my further work in this field.

Concentrating on selected aspects of policy concerning the special-school system in the USSR relieves me of the task, which I would find difficult, of undertaking a medical-psychological and didactic-methodological analysis. It does, however, also offer the opportunity of taking into consideration the ideological-political framework of the special-school system. Collaborating with Gerda Freiburg (Hanover), who has already made an East/West German comparison of the special school system, has enabled me to sustain the comparative dimension of this study. Working together, we intend to examine, on the basis of an educational policy comparison, the development of the pedagogy of the disabled and of the special-school system in the USSR and in both the German states, treating it as an intra- and inter-system problem and thus to emphasise the historically determined analogies and differences between the subjects of comparison.

My interest in this topic, to which comparativists and investigators of Eastern Europe seldom pay attention, resulted from conversations with West German teachers in special schools who have undertaken study tours to the Soviet Union and also from the literature in the form of reports of such journeys, which have been published in book form. Western specialists visiting the USSR were usually shown one or two institutions in the special-school system in Moscow and Leningrad, more rarely in Kiev. Thus, for example, the members of the group tour organised by the British Association for the Retarded (1977) and also a group of West German students of special pedagogy (1980) both visited the same institution in Moscow, namely Special School No. 109 (Shennan, p. 11). Without doubting the importance of study visits to the USSR in general, it should be stated that reports of these journeys do reflect to a substantial degree – as one author frankly acknowledges – the claims of the Soviet partners in discussion. In Moscow one member of the International Union for Home Education received the following answer to the question about the number of special kindergartens: ‘We have as many as we need’. The information that in 1975 2 per cent of all school-age children in the USSR attended special schools was accompanied by the remark: ‘In the USSR no cost is spared in education’ (Diemert, pp. 650–3). In any case, the figure quoted above is twice as high as the figure obtained from official Soviet statistics but only half as high as the percentage of special-school pupils in the total school population of West Germany.

Here we step on to the very slippery surface of educational statistics, whose reliability and comparability prove especially dubious in the area of special education, particularly as they depend to a great extent upon the definition of the concept of ‘need for special education’. The sparseness and lack of discrimination in Soviet statistics by which the development of special education could be evaluated is in marked contrast to the usual avalanche of data concerning other areas of education: for example, the numbers of pupils and students in the secondary and tertiary sectors. According to the *Soviet Yearbook of Statistics*, the calculated percentage of special-school pupils in the school year 1975–6 was less than 1 per cent of the total school population. In 1980 this proportion totalled 1.25 per cent, compared with 2.56 per cent in the GDR (1978) and 4.01 per cent in West Germany. The tendency of this proportion to increase in the USSR, after the many previous years of stagnation, is quite unmistakable – the percentage rose from 0.6 in 1965 to 1.25 in 1980. In the GDR between 1965 and 1978 the development in this field was in the reverse

direction, and in West Germany over the same years there was an increase from 2.64 to 4.01 per cent (Freiburg, p. 457).

The provision of special educational institutions differs for the town and country populations in the USSR by 4 to 1 in favour of town dwellers, although only twice as many people live in the towns as in the countryside (*Narodnoe*, p. 7). These details, as well as, among others, the reports of Soviet doctors practising applied sociological research, clearly indicate that an interpretation of country life as healthy and idyllic could not in any way be sustained. On the contrary, comments from such specialists as neurologists and psychiatrists point to alcoholism in the countryside. Productivity of modern agriculture is adversely affected not only by the flight of population to the city but also by the low quality of work of the remaining population. There is an uncontrolled high birth rate among alcoholic parents (on average, seven children per family) in comparison with the 'normal' village family with two children. According to one source, that carries with it the risk 'that if this disproportion is maintained, the number of children with a low learning ability will increase even further' (Lupandin, p. 133). Indeed, the author concerned proposes a formula for calculating the absolute increase of the mentally backward in the whole of the Soviet Union over one generation.

The sketchy picture provided by travel reports and accessible data indicates the need for reliable interpretation and, in addition, shows that not too much value should be attached in Eastern European research to the deceptive worth of so-called 'original source materials'. Having carried out research with the help of Soviet publications available in West German libraries, we found the source materials concerning the issue under consideration to be inadequate, since, as is well known, the foreign language publications by Soviet authors have to a large extent a self-evaluating function (cf. Vlasova). The publications by GDR authors, however, seem sterile, unreflective and very descriptive in their presentation of the Soviet special education system. It is difficult for me to assess, at the present time, the exact value of the treatment of this problem in Anglo-Saxon specialist literature. The main handicap, in preparing my contribution, was the lack of the relevant Soviet journal, *Defektologiya*. Indeed, my research would not have been possible if my colleague, John Dunstan, had not given me timely advice and if Birmingham University Library had not offered assistance. This is why I look on my contribution here largely as an introduction to the topic. Please note also that my presentation aims at comparing Soviet special education not only with

institutions established in the German-speaking countries but also with those existing in other linguistic-cultural areas, in particular the Anglo-Saxon area.

I propose first to describe the institutions recently established within the framework of the Soviet special-school system, i.e. the boarding schools and the full-time schools for children 'with delayed mental development' (*s zaderzhkoy psikhicheskogo razvitiya*). One should remember that these new types of special schools cannot be equated, in terms of school population and aims, with either the schools for educationally subnormal children in West Germany or with the auxiliary schools for backward children in the GDR. Interest in these new kinds of institution has recently been aroused in the West mainly for two reasons. First, because up to now they have only been mentioned in passing by Western specialist publications as an experiment. Secondly, because, since their establishment, they have caused a fundamental change in the Soviet attitude to the function of the Soviet special-school system within the entire secondary education sector at its present stage of development.

Before we touch on the history of the development of institutions for children with delayed mental development and on the implications of, and the socio-political background to, educational policy decisions which have been taken by the authorities, it seems sensible to describe the relevant characteristics of these new institutions within the special-school system. Their role was defined in official regulations that appeared in Moscow in 1982 (*Byulleten'*, p. 26 *et seq.*).

In the provision of an alternative form of organisation, such as boarding schools or full-time schools, one can assume a tacit recognition of a covert school stratification in the background of children admitted to these institutions. This would certainly not be mentioned in official publications. In this context it should be indicated that boarding and full-time schools in the Soviet education system cannot be counted as being among the institutions for the privileged nor as expensive for the parents. Certainly, in 1980, the Soviet hosts (those responsible for the administration of two special schools in Moscow) did not conceal from Western visitors the existence of social problems, i.e. the existence of 'unfavourable' homes and 'unfavourable' living conditions (Freiburg, p. 185).

The thesis recently advanced by influential Soviet defectologists concerning the structure of handicap and its prognosis, including the 'decisive significance' of the 'upbringing environment' and the aggregate of all social factors that affect the formation of the mind and

personality of the anomalous child, should lead in its logical conclusion to the elimination of all negative influences (Vlasova, pp. 131–2). This, in the case of the upbringing and schooling of the relatively slightly handicapped children, leads to a preference for the boarding school and unequivocally downgrades the home and family environment of such children. Only in exceptional cases and with the agreement of the Ministry of Education for the particular republic can special classes for children with delayed mental development be set up in the mass schools. Such classes must always operate on a full-time basis.

The fundamental problem of the full-time boarding schools for children with delayed mental development concerns selection criteria. These should ensure, on the one hand, that all children in need of auxiliary schooling are admitted into the special institutions and, on the other, that the latter are not used by the ordinary schools as an outlet for their problem pupils. The task is extremely delicate because the concept of 'delayed development' can hardly be quantified and the validity of tests of 'mental development' used in the West is very much doubted in Soviet psychology.

The position of these institutions lies, as has already been said, somewhere between the auxiliary school (*vspomogatel'naya shkola*) and the ordinary school. The boundary between the latter and the auxiliary schools, whose pupils until now have been selected essentially on the basis of a concept of permanent feeble-mindedness, plays an important role. Among other factors, the following clinical forms and conditions are considered to be valid criteria for the acceptance of children with delayed mental development into full-time boarding schools: oligophrenia, organic dementia, epilepsy and schizophrenia.

The difference between the ordinary and special schools is explained in a clause which states that children suffering simply from forms of 'pedagogic neglect' should not be admitted to institutions for children with delayed mental development (*Byulleten'*, p. 28). In fact, special schools should deal with children with real difficulties in cognitive activity, caused by some inadequacy in the central nervous system. It is in the aforementioned regulations, issued jointly by the USSR Ministry of Education and the USSR Ministry of Health, that the highly amorphous concept of 'pedagogic neglect' appears. In the Soviet *Reference Book of Defectology* there are contradictory definitions of 'pedagogic neglect'. At one point 'pedagogic neglect' is defined as 'a deviation from the norm in the child's development,

which is caused by a failing in upbringing and education'. A few lines further, however, the same author provides another interpretation and 'pedagogic neglect' is seen as the result of 'the delayed development of the child (*Defektologicheskiiy*, p. 267).

The boarding schools discussed above admit children who attend grades one and two of the ordinary schools and 'have constant difficulties in mastering the learning material', as well as potential school beginners who 'are not prepared for mastering the school subjects' because of damage to their brains, causing delayed mental development (*Byulleten'*, p. 27). From this survey of the acceptance criteria, it may be supposed that early school performance, or expected performance, is at least a contributory factor in accepting seven- to nine-year-old children into the full-time boarding schools, as far as even the intentions of the educational policy-makers are concerned.

One must not overlook the efforts made during the past decade by Soviet scholars in analysing medical-psychological differential diagnostic indications or selection criteria for this type of handicap. However, the pedagogic identification of a child's readiness for school is much easier and less problematic to demonstrate and to assess than the diagnosis of medical, neurological and psychological derivations or deviations that could be responsible for an inadequate performance by the child.

The directives of the Ministry of Education for the RSFSR can be seen as evidence that such fears are not groundless; pedagogues in the mass schools have not worried in the past about the type of damage and even less about the possible origin and aetiology, and have, therefore, put great pressure on the medical-pedagogic commissions, which alone are responsible for the allocation of handicapped children to the relevant special school. On inspection of the auxiliary schools in the Chelyabinsk region (Urals) and Tula (Central Russia), the regional school authorities were censured by the Ministry because children were often sent to auxiliary schools on the ground of a diagnosis that did not conform to the formal instructions for acceptance into these institutions (*Sbornik*, p. 2). In this ministerial decree there was also the criticism that decisions, which were all-important for the children, were taken without proper medical investigation. Apparently, some teachers in the ordinary schools had declared young misfits to be 'mentally handicapped' in the primary and also the secondary stage and had taken 'all possible measures to transfer such children to

auxiliary schools' (*Sbornik*, p. 2). Such failings should cause no great surprise to those familiar with the history of Soviet education.

Much greater heterogeneity for children with delayed mental development is anticipated in the variety of criteria for admission into boarding schools. The chief medical criterion is delayed mental development of a cerebral–organic origin, usually of a residual nature, as a result of infection, trauma or intoxication of the nervous system. More rarely, the delay is caused through genetically conditioned handicaps. These primary damages take the form of defects in memory, in the power of concentration, and in the speed of cognitive processes, and result in a lower performance level by the child. They are connected with a minimal underdevelopment of some cerebral cortical functions.

The list of medical criteria is completed by cases where delayed mental development is accompanied by signs of affective–volitional immaturity. As a precaution, the admission of children with the aforementioned types of handicap is said to be 'the exception'. The accepted admission criteria encompass the following clinical variations in delayed mental development:

- (a) Constitutional (harmonic), mental and psycho-physical infantilism.
- (b) Delay of a somatogenic origin, accompanied by forms of permanent somatic asthenia and somatically conditioned infantilism.
- (c) Delay in mental development of a psychogenic origin following pathological personality development of a neurotic type, accompanied by signs of mental inertia and psychogenic infantilism (*Byulleten'*, p. 27).

This detailed list of criteria illustrates that at the start of the 1980s the psychomatic illnesses affecting children and the distinct forms of infantilism needing cure and remedial treatment have made their way into the Soviet educational system. The abovementioned three categories of delayed development for the diagnosis of children in need of special schooling, are, indeed, explained by 'unfavourable circumstances of upbringing'. This represents a definite step forward in official Soviet publications.

The schooling of children with delayed mental development proceeds according to a special timetable and teaching plan, which

ensures that the full range of learning material of the eight-year general school (secondary stage I) is covered. Attendance at a full-time boarding school lasts, however, ten years and the covering of the primary stage (grades one to three) and the secondary stage (grades four to eight) is in each case prolonged by one year. There are two variations of the primary stage. Children who have never attended school go first into a preparatory class. However, children who are transferred to this type of special school from the ordinary school must attend the primary stage for one more year in the form of a 'finishing' class. Admission into the full-time boarding schools is limited to the primary stage, usually grades one or two; allocation to grade three is exceptional. A child may not, however, be retained for the whole course of the primary stage. The intention is to integrate the children back into the mass schools once their individual difficulties have been corrected. This is in marked contrast to the 'railway siding' and cul-de-sac of the auxiliary school.

The experiences of West German schools for the educationally subnormal definitely seem to be relevant in this respect, as they are conceptually similar to the type of Soviet special school under consideration here. In her comparison of the special-school system in both the German states, Gerda Freiburg, the West German writer already cited in this paper, states that in the GDR a concept of feeble-mindedness, which was introduced in Germany at the turn of the century, is used for differentiating the auxiliary schoolchildren from the common schoolchildren, on the one hand, and from the 'idiots', on the other. With respect to dementia, the return of pupils to ordinary schools from the auxiliary schools of the GDR and from the Soviet auxiliary schools is not envisaged. For the purposes of justification, the GDR cites the Soviet literature on the pedagogy of oligophrenia.

In West Germany the concept of feeble-mindedness is not used any longer, but there, too, '... the frontier between the normal and the special school remains closed'. Gerda Freiburg has established that the 'return to the normal school almost never happens' (Freiburg, pp. 176–7). Continued attendance, which has characterised the West German auxiliary school for the mentally handicapped over the past decade, may have negative implications for the chances of success of the procedure to reintegrate into the mass schools children who have attended for some time the new Soviet special school. In 1981 the *Report to the 26th Congress of the CPSU* established that between 1976 and 1980 the number of experimental schools for children with delayed

mental development had increased from three to thirteen (*Defektologiya*, p. 5). Problems may well arise in the attempt made through the timetable of these schools to achieve an integration of general and vocational education within the framework established by the general education school. The top grades, namely the eighth and the 'special' eighth 'finishing' grades, manifest a professional orientation not only in virtue of their polytechnical basis but also by providing the pupils with a professional qualification. In view of the pupil numbers and the number of hours available for vocational training – on average five hours per week over the two years – the comparison with analogous problems in the 'normal' ten- or eleven-year school becomes relevant.

The double role of the general education school to provide both general education and vocational training has already come to grief once. The Law of 24 December 1958 introduced eight years of compulsory attendance instead of the former seven years, while the secondary school upper stage remained unchanged at three years (grades nine to eleven). This Law also specified the basis of 'production training', which was to be offered to the older pupils in addition to general education. The school-leavers, apart from the graduation certificate, were to receive 'a certificate of a qualification acquired in the chosen occupation'. Only six years later, a few months before Khrushchev's downfall, vocational training was removed from the timetable of the general education secondary school. A few years ago specialised vocational training was introduced for pupils in grades nine and ten of the general education school in specially created teaching–production combines. However, it did not meet with unanimous approval from the relevant professions. The quality of this form of education and the equating of the vocational training acquired in it with that received in secondary vocational–technical schools was questioned by vocational pedagogues, economic experts and managers, among others, because of what was considered to be an inadequate number of hours of training (about the same number as in the special school).

In retrospect, the question arises as to why there had virtually been no real structural and numerical development in the Soviet special-education system over the period between the mid-1930s and the last decade, while in the Western industrialised nations during this time many changes had taken place and new solutions to problems had been attempted. The search for a pattern to explain many years of stagnation is a very complicated exercise, as it includes a series of

political, economic, scientific, theoretical and educational policy aspects. This topic has, as yet, rarely been the subject of attention in comparative educational studies in the West and has also not been examined in Soviet specialist literature. We consider the many dimensions of this problem worthy of further consideration.

Let me, therefore, refer to the evidence provided by the early Soviet developments in this field. With the decree of the Council of People's Commissars (10.12.1919), all institutions for handicapped children which were run on a philanthropic basis in pre-Revolutionary Russia were taken over by the state (Abakumov, p. 362). I. A. Dyachkov, one of the best known Soviet defectologists, evaluated this move in the following words: 'Because of the state-controlled nature of the education of anomalous children and because special pedagogy was drawn into the system of pedagogical sciences principally different laws of development of educational theory and practice were brought into operation' (Dyachkov, p. 3). However, the renunciation of all forms of support implied an impoverishment in the contact and communication between all the institutions for handicapped children and the outside world, and also entailed the removal of these institutions from open public control. The importance of this for future developments cannot be overemphasised.

In subsequent years the Soviet government took measures demanding the quantitative and qualitative development of special educational institutions and differentiation of their network (*Narodnoe*, pp. 362–4). However, in July 1936 the Central Committee of the CPSU reproved the People's Commissariat for Education of the RSFSR for having set up a large number of 'special schools' with various designations. The notorious Central Committee's decision 'On Pedological Perversions in the People's Commissariat for Education' represented a characteristic hallmark in the history of Soviet science and education in general and in the development of defectology and special education in particular. The examination of individual children and their subsequent categorisation on this basis as 'mentally backward', 'defective' or 'difficult' was condemned by the Central Committee as contrary to common sense and the transfer of such children from the ordinary schools to the special schools and classes for 'difficult, mentally backward, neurotic etc. pupils' was rejected. The People's Commissariat of Education for All-Union Republics was instructed by the Central Committee of the Party to examine the schools for children who were difficult to educate and to transfer the majority of the children to ordinary schools (Anweiler and Meyer, p. 227).

The consequences of this measure for special education are easy to judge. It put an end to the up till then quite lively scientific dispute about the role and relative significance of biological factors and the social environment in education and upbringing. According to the interpretation of two formerly prominent Soviet pedagogues, F. F. Korolev and V. E. Gmurman, by this decision 'pedagogic science was set on the right path' (Korolev, p. 86). But both these experts also indicate that pedagogic research, as well as child psychology, has had to pay a high price for this decision. One should also keep in mind that in the original Soviet publication, prepared in the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the USSR, the two experts stated that 'there was then a generally tense atmosphere in the field of child research; through this the value of the laboratory experiment and of psychological research methods was negated' (Korolev, pp. 86–7). The equivalent translation of the relevant paragraph in the German language edition of the work, which appeared in the GDR, was 'In connection with this [i.e. the rehabilitation of the pedagogy – L.N.] children began to be studied more attentatively on the one hand, and on the other, grave doubts were expressed about the value of the laboratory experiment and the methods of psychological investigation' (Korolev, p. 84). This free translation renders innocuous the evaluation of Soviet scientists, who have attributed negative consequences to the already mentioned Central Committee decision of 4 July 1936. Admittedly, in the *Soviet Reference Book of Defectology*, which appeared in 1970, an unambiguously positive significance was given to the aforementioned Party decision on the development of Soviet pedagogy (*Defektologicheskii*, pp. 58–9). The proposition '... that the performance or poor conduct of pupils is socially and genetically conditioned' was rejected in this Party decision. The result of the allegedly false interpretation of the Central Committee's thesis about the role of inherited factors and the social environment about the formation of the human organism and its various characteristics was the abandonment of medical–pedagogical research. The decisive factors in the formation of the growing personality were seen to be the social surroundings and upbringing (Korolev, p. 157). As a result, the investigations into human genetic development were delayed for a long time.

In the political atmosphere of that time many pedagogic scientists were the victims of slander and repression. For example, P. P. Blonsky, today one of the recognised representatives of early Soviet pedagogy, was forced into self-criticism and was censured. *Thinking*

*and Speech*, the famous work of L. S. Vygotsky, who is today considered to be the 'outstanding Soviet psychologist' (*Defektologicheskii*, pp: 58–9), was denied official approval for more than twenty years after its first appearance in 1926. The author, who 'laid the foundation stone for the systematic and fruitful development of various fields of special psychology in the USSR' (*Defektologicheskii*, p. 59), was denied almost all official pedagogic recognition in the following two decades.

Lastly, we should not neglect to ask what the motives were which drove the initiators of this ominous 'Party encyclical' that had such weighty consequences for Soviet pedagogy and psychology and interrupted the development of the pedagogy of the handicapped and the system of special schooling for several decades. Oskar Anweiler sees 'the main reason for this single action not in the scientific problems of pedagogy, nor in the shortcomings of its practical application', but in the political field: 'The increasing "stabilisation" of the school and the development of an authoritarian state pedagogy, which culminated in Stalin's "personality cult", could not allow any elements of the individualisation of upbringing in pedagogy, nor any regard for the individual person' (Anweiler, pp. 60–1).

The consequences of the Party decision we have just referred to were so deep and lasting that in 1969 the present vice-president of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the USSR, the psychologist A. G. Khripkova, felt compelled (and able) to admit that '. . . to a significant extent one can explain the serious failings in the development of special schools by the underrating of biological factors' (*Sovetskaya Pedagogika*, No. 3, 1969, p. 34). This statement demonstrates publicly that Soviet scientists have since then been able to gain more scope for their applied research through the general philosophical discussion of whether the determinants of human development are social or biological.

In 1982, in the philosophical journal *Voprosy Filosofii*, an organ of the Central Committee of the Party, it was plainly stated that '. . . the denial of biopsychic determinants in character formation would also mean at the same time the denial of the socio-biological unity of the individual . . . and in the final count also the denial of the dialectical-materialist thesis of the mind as a function of matter structured in a particular way' (*Voprosy*, pp. 65–6). The point was also made that '. . . the biopsychic determinants of individual development, mediated through upbringing . . . (are now allocated) . . . a certain influence on the characteristics of moral consciousness and of moral

behaviour' (*Voprosy*, pp. 65–6). These standpoints, newly taken in Soviet science, make comprehensible to a certain degree the broadening of the criteria for admission to institutions in the special-education system and the creation of new differentiated institutional forms.

However, the deciding factor for the introduction of new concepts into defectology (or the reactivation of ideas that were authoritative for Soviet science before the 1936 Central Committee decision) and for the relatively dynamic development of the special-education system in the course of the last decade, constitute, after the brief political 'thaw' during the Khrushchev era, the structural and substantial changes in educational policy in 1965 in the domain of the mass schools. Their aim was to raise the level of 'scientific' knowledge in the contents of learning. The primary stage was reduced from four to three years and there was a corresponding increase in emphasis upon nurturing in young pupils the ability to think abstractly. This was sought through the introduction of additional material and through the accentuation of a theoretical approach to teaching in the mother tongue.

After many years of silence about the question of special pedagogy and the special-school system at the educational policy level, the Minister of Education for the USSR, M. A. Prokof'ev, tackled this problem twice in 1971. The reason for this was concern about the health of schoolchildren (*Sovetskaya pedagogika*, No. 12, 1971, pp. 10–15) and the relatively high rate of grade repeating and of dropping out in the mass schools (*Sovetskaya pedagogika*, No. 3, 1971, pp. 8–12). Despite pressure exerted by the higher education authorities on the lower and by the latter on the teachers, Prokof'ev complained that, according to the statistics for the school year 1969–70, the percentage of grade repeaters was 2.8 per cent of the total school population and that in the course of that year there was a dropout rate of 2.5 per cent from all classes of the system as a whole (*Sovetskaya pedagogika*, No. 3, 1971, p. 11).

Two solutions were discussed. The first aimed at a reduction of the total learning material compulsory for all pupils and the removal of all complicated themes from the syllabi. The practical measures were introduced through the joint order of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Ministry of Education of the USSR on 29 December 1977 (*Pravda*, 29.12.1977), which heralded the first retreat from the 'academisation' of the secondary school and re-established the aforementioned double qualification. Within the framework of this change, mathematics teaching underwent a radical reconstruction; in

the upper stages such subjects as physics, biology and history came to be taught with new, narrower and less complicated textbooks. The overloading of primary pupils was reduced through the rationalisation of timetables, through the increased teaching of skills and the return to proven teaching methods. The aim of reducing the burden on children was to be achieved through the return to a four-year primary stage, starting, however, from the age of six and not seven, as before, as anticipated in the hypothetical projections for the future school ('School 2000'). The second solution suggested for raising the sinking achievement level of the mass school and for strengthening the motivation of pupils was the creation of a differentiated school system for the gifted and the 'weak'. These suggestions were dismissed in principle by Prokof'ev, but only after discussion and without any condemnatory labelling (*Sovetskaya pedagogika*, No. 3, 1971, p. 12). In the light of this evidence, we should not underrate the pressures coming from the steadily growing groups of people interested in shaping educational policy in the USSR. To rescue the mass schools from 'bleeding to death' and to avoid an extension of the network of schools with a special profile (in foreign languages, mathematics, physics or other subjects), the Minister outlined the following alternative: 'For children with transient, but fairly long-lasting delayed development, a special system of schools and classes is necessary' (*Sovetskaya pedagogika*, No. 3, 1971, p. 12).

Experts, not only pedagogues and psychologists but also doctors, were called upon by the Minister of Education to develop a reliable instrument of diagnosis for individual cases falling on the boundary between normal and pathological and to test the effectiveness of corrective measures (*Sovetskaya pedagogika*, No. 12, 1971, p. 15). In this way the decision of the Central Committee on pedology of 4 July 1936 has been, if not formally rescinded, then at least practically revised in its essential character. (One can trace a similar development in the Central Committee's decision of 14 August 1946, concerning the Leningrad journals *Svezda* and *Leningrad*, which affected literary life to a great extent in the years 1946–52.)

Among the motives which helped to bring about this development is the social position and the influence of the teacher in the mass Soviet school. In his address on the creation of the special school for children with delayed mental development, Minister Prokof'ev offered words of consolation to the troubled teachers: 'Until now we laid the blame for failure in the education of such children exclusively on the teachers' lack of achievement. Is that fair? And, above all, who benefits from

it?' (*Sovetskaya pedagogika*, No. 12, 1971, p. 15). The characteristic slogan of Soviet schooling for many years: 'There are no bad pupils, only bad teachers', has been, at least, weakened because of this development. The 'question of fairness' conceals the demands made on the mass school teachers, who were actually entrusted with the education of some categories of children in need of special schooling. The total amount of pedagogical work carried out by a teacher in the general school extends, as one Soviet economic expert judged in 1973, to 50–60 hours per week; of this, the performance of the duties of class teacher, which is additional to teaching, requires not less than 11–15 hours (Turchenko, p. 105). The pay scales for all types of school teachers were raised by about 20 per cent in 1972. Additionally, one should consider that teachers in special schools receive 25 per cent additional salary in comparison with their colleagues in the mass schools and that the class numbers are approximately half those in the mass schools (i.e. fifteen to twenty pupils) (*Sbornik*, p. 29; *Byulleten'*, No. 3, 1981, p. 30).

The strength of the demand for schools for children with delayed mental development is frequently determined by the functional capability of the ordinary school. This is in turn essentially determined by the teachers' commitment and the social prestige of their profession. Development in this area was not satisfactory in the last decade, as can be seen in a critical statement, published in April 1982, by the Deputy Minister for Education of the USSR, who said: 'The discrepancy between the demands made on teachers and the level of remuneration for work done has increased. In the last decade, the increase in teachers' salaries has fallen considerably behind the rate of increase in salaries of workers in other fields and in the economy as a whole' (Yagodkin, p. 55). In fact, the gap in that period of time had increased 2.5 times to the teachers' disadvantage. On average the teacher earned 32.8 per cent less than an engineer or technician in industry and 23.8 per cent less than an industrial worker. This development 'has led to a deterioration in the quality of the teaching profession and to a rapid reduction in the proportion of male teachers' (Yagodkin, p. 55). The workload of the teacher and the psychological and physical intensity of his work has, however, not decreased over the last ten years and now exceeds the normal working week (41 hours) nearly one and a half times. The Deputy Minister concluded: 'All these factors have a negative effect on the quality of the teacher's work and, what is especially important, on his state of health and this causes premature retirement' (Yagodkin, p. 55). From this official

statement, and from others, it is clear why among the Soviet population the occupation of butcher ranks above that of the teacher, who is 'handicapped' in this way (Aitmatov).

Looking back over our topic, we would like to show our understanding of the Soviet public's concern that the steadily growing number of auxiliary schools may simply be due to the increase in unwanted births associated with the high level of consumption of alcohol (Balain). Let us rather express the hope that in the future the increase in opportunities for special schooling will be determined solely by humane considerations and the promotion of more highly differentiated measures for remedial treatment.

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